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(71) Applicant ( <i>for all designated States except US</i> ): <b>MERCK SHARP &amp; DOHME LIMITED [GB/GB]; Hertford Road, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire EN11 9BU (GB).</b>			
(72) Inventors; and			
(75) Inventors/Applicants ( <i>for US only</i> ): <b>CASTRO PINEIRO, Jose Luis [ES/GB]; Terlings Park, Eastwick Road, Harlow, Essex CM20 2QR (GB). MACLEOD, Angus, Murray [GB/GB]; Terlings Park, Eastwick Road, Harlow, Essex CM20 2QR (GB). ROWLEY, Michael [GB/GB]; Terlings Park, Eastwick Road, Harlow, Essex CM20 2QR (GB). VAN NIEL, Monique, Bodil [NL/GB]; Terlings Park, Eastwick Road, Harlow, Essex CM20 2QR (GB).</b>			
(74) Agent: <b>THOMPSON, John; Merck &amp; Co., Inc., European Patent Dept., Terlings Park, Eastwick Road, Harlow, Essex CM20 2QR (GB).</b>			

(54) Title: **PIPERAZINE, PIPERIDINE AND TETRAHYDROPYRIDINE DERIVATIVES**

(57) Abstract

A class of N-substituted piperazine, piperidine and tetrahydropyridine derivatives, linked by a fluoro-substituted alkylene chain to a fused bicyclic heteroaromatic moiety such as indolyl, and further substituted at the 4-position by an optionally substituted alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl-alkyl or heteroaryl-alkyl moiety, are selective agonists of 5-HT<sub>1</sub>-like receptors, being potent agonists of the human 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor subtype whilst possessing at least a 10-fold selective affinity for the 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor subtype relative to the 5-HT<sub>1A</sub> subtype; they are therefore useful in the treatment and/or prevention of clinical conditions, in particular migraine and associated disorders, for which a subtype-selective agonist of 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptors is indicated, whilst eliciting fewer side-effects, notably adverse cardiovascular events, than those associated with non-subtype-selective 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor agonists.

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**PIPERAZINE, PIPERIDINE AND TETRAHYDROPYRIDINE  
DERIVATIVES**

The present invention relates to a class of substituted piperazine,  
5 piperidine and tetrahydropyridine derivatives which act on  
5-hydroxytryptamine (5-HT) receptors, being selective agonists of so-called  
“5-HT<sub>1</sub>-like” receptors. They are therefore useful in the treatment of  
clinical conditions for which a selective agonist of these receptors is  
indicated.

10 It has been known for some time that 5-HT<sub>1</sub>-like receptor agonists  
which exhibit selective vasoconstrictor activity are of use in the treatment  
of migraine (see, for example, A. Doenicke *et al.*, *The Lancet*, 1988, Vol. 1,  
1309-11; and W. Feniuk and P.P.A. Humphrey, *Drug Development  
Research*, 1992, 26, 235-240).

15 The human 5-HT<sub>1</sub>-like or 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor has recently been shown  
by molecular cloning techniques to exist in two distinct subtypes. These  
subtypes have been termed 5-HT<sub>1Dα</sub> (or 5-HT<sub>1D.1</sub>) and 5-HT<sub>1Dβ</sub> (or  
5-HT<sub>1D.2</sub>), and their amino acid sequences are disclosed and claimed in  
WO-A-91/17174.

20 The 5-HT<sub>1Dα</sub> receptor subtype in humans is believed to reside on  
sensory terminals in the dura mater. Stimulation of the 5-HT<sub>1Dα</sub> subtype  
inhibits the release of inflammatory neuropeptides which are thought to  
contribute to the headache pain of migraine. The human 5-HT<sub>1Dβ</sub> receptor  
subtype, meanwhile, is located predominantly on the blood vessels and in  
25 the brain, and hence may play a part in mediating constriction of cerebral  
and coronary arteries, as well as CNS effects.

Administration of the prototypical 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> agonist sumatriptan  
(GR43175) to humans is known to give rise at therapeutic doses to certain  
adverse cardiovascular events (see, for example, F. Willett *et al.*, *Br. Med.  
J.*, 1992, 304, 1415; J.P. Ottervanger *et al.*, *The Lancet*, 1993, 341, 861-2;  
30 and D.N. Bateman, *The Lancet*, 1993, 341, 221-4). Since sumatriptan

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barely discriminates between the human 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> and 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> receptor subtypes (cf. WO-A-91/17174, Table 1), and since it is the blood vessels with which the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> subtype is most closely associated, it is believed that the cardiovascular side-effects observed with sumatriptan can be

5 attributed to stimulation of the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> receptor subtype. It is accordingly considered (cf. G.W. Rebeck *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA*, 1994, **91**, 3666-9) that compounds which can interact selectively with the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor subtype, whilst having a less pronounced action at the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> subtype, might be free from, or at any rate less prone to, the undesirable

10 cardiovascular and other side-effects associated with non-subtype-selective 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor agonists, whilst at the same time maintaining a beneficial level of anti-migraine activity.

The compounds of the present invention, being selective 5-HT<sub>1</sub>-like receptor agonists, are accordingly of benefit in the treatment of migraine and associated conditions, e.g. cluster headache, chronic paroxysmal hemicrania, headache associated with vascular disorders, tension headache and paediatric migraine. In particular, the compounds according to this invention are potent agonists of the human 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor subtype. Moreover, the compounds in accordance with this invention have been found to possess at least a 10-fold selective affinity for the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor subtype relative to the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> subtype, and they can therefore be expected to manifest fewer side-effects than those associated with non-subtype-selective 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor agonists.

Several distinct classes of substituted five-membered heteroaromatic compounds are described in published European patent applications 0438230, 0494774 and 0497512, and published International patent applications 93/18029, 94/02477 and 94/03446. The compounds described therein are stated to be agonists of 5-HT<sub>1</sub>-like receptors, and accordingly to be of particular use in the treatment of migraine and associated conditions. None of these publications, however, discloses nor

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even suggests the piperazine, piperidine and tetrahydropyridine derivatives provided by the present invention.

In EP-A-0548813 is described a series of alkoxyypyridin-4-yl and alkoxyypyrimidin-4-yl derivatives of indol-3-ylalkylpiperazines which are 5 alleged to provide treatment of vascular or vascular-related headaches, including migraine. There is, however, no disclosure nor any suggestion in EP-A-0548813 of replacing the alkoxyypyridine or alkoxyypyrimidine substituent with an optionally substituted alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl-alkyl or heteroaryl-alkyl substituent; nor is there any suggestion therein that the 10 alkylene chain present in the indol-3-ylalkylpiperazine portion of the molecule might be substituted with one or more fluorine atoms.

WO-A-91/18897 describes a class of tryptamine derivatives substituted by various five-membered rings, which are stated to be specific to a particular type of "5-HT<sub>1</sub>-like" receptor and thus to be effective agents 15 for the treatment of clinical conditions, particularly migraine, requiring this activity. A further class of tryptamine derivatives with alleged anti-migraine activity is disclosed in WO-A-94/02460. However, neither WO-A-91/18897 nor WO-A-94/02460 discloses or suggests the piperazine, piperidine and tetrahydropyridine derivatives provided by the present 20 invention.

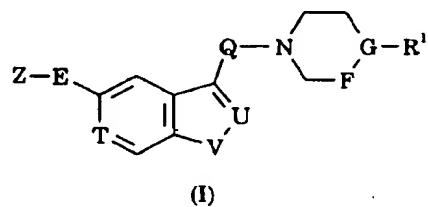
Moreover, nowhere in the prior art mentioned above is there any disclosure of a subtype-selective 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor agonist having a 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor binding affinity (IC<sub>50</sub>) below 50 nM and at least a 10-fold selective affinity for the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor subtype relative to the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> subtype. 25 The compounds according to the present invention are subtype-selective 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor agonists having a human 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor binding affinity (IC<sub>50</sub>) below 50 nM, typically below 10 nM and preferably below 1 nM; and at least a 10-fold selective affinity, typically at least a 50-fold selective affinity and preferably at least a 100-fold selective affinity, 30 for the human 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor subtype relative to the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> subtype.

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Moreover, the compounds in accordance with this invention possess interesting properties in terms of their efficacy and/or bioavailability.

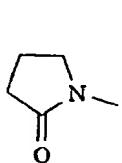
The present invention provides a compound of formula 1, or a salt or prodrug thereof:

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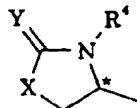


wherein

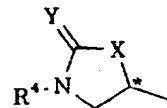
Z represents hydrogen, halogen, cyano, nitro, trifluoromethyl, -OR<sup>5</sup>,  
 10 -OCOR<sup>5</sup>, -OCONR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -OCH<sub>2</sub>CN, -OCH<sub>2</sub>CONR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -SR<sup>5</sup>, -SOR<sup>5</sup>, -SO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>5</sup>,  
 -SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>COR<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>CO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>SO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>6</sup>, -COR<sup>5</sup>, -CO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>5</sup>,  
 -CONR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, or a group of formula (Za), (Zb), (Zc) or (Zd):



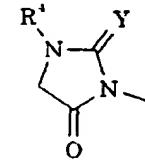
(Za)



(Zb)



(Zc)



(Zd)

15

in which the asterisk \* denotes a chiral centre; or

Z represents an optionally substituted five-membered heteroaromatic ring selected from furan, thiophene, pyrrole, oxazole, thiazole, isoxazole, isothiazole, imidazole, pyrazole, oxadiazole,  
 20 thiadiazole, triazole and tetrazole;

X represents oxygen, sulphur, -NH- or methylene;

Y represents oxygen or sulphur;

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E represents a chemical bond or a straight or branched alkylene chain containing from 1 to 4 carbon atoms;

Q represents a straight or branched alkylene chain containing from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, substituted in any position by one or more fluorine atoms;

T represents nitrogen or CH;

U represents nitrogen or C-R<sup>2</sup>;

V represents oxygen, sulphur or N-R<sup>3</sup>;

-F-G- represents -CH<sub>2</sub>-N-, -CH<sub>2</sub>-CH- or -CH=C-;

R<sup>1</sup> represents C<sub>3-6</sub> alkenyl, C<sub>3-6</sub> alkynyl, aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, any of which groups may be optionally substituted;

R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> independently represent hydrogen or C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl; and

R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> independently represent hydrogen, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, trifluoromethyl, phenyl, methylphenyl, or an optionally substituted aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl group; or R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup>, when linked through a nitrogen atom, together represent the residue of an optionally substituted azetidine, pyrrolidine, piperidine, morpholine or piperazine ring.

Where Z in the compounds of formula I above represents a five-membered heteroaromatic ring, this ring may be optionally substituted by one or, where possible, two substituents. As will be appreciated, where Z represents an oxadiazole, thiadiazole or tetrazole ring, only one substituent will be possible; otherwise, one or two optional substituents may be accommodated around the five-membered heteroaromatic ring Z.

Examples of suitable substituents on the five-membered heteroaromatic ring Z include C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkenyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3-7</sub> cycloalkyl, aryl, aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, C<sub>3-7</sub> heterocycloalkyl, heteroaryl, heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylthio, amino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylamino, halogen, cyano and trifluoromethyl.

The group R<sup>1</sup> may be optionally substituted by one or more substituents, as also may the groups R<sup>5</sup> or R<sup>6</sup> where these represent

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aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl. Where R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> or R<sup>6</sup> represents aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, any optional substitution will suitably be on the aryl or heteroaryl moiety thereof, although substitution on the alkyl moiety thereof is an alternative possibility. Examples of  
5 optional substituents thereon include halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, triazolyl, tetrazolyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl-tetrazolyl, hydroxy, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylthio, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkoxycarbonyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkylcarbonyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylsulphonyl, arylsulphonyl, amino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminomethyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkylcarbonylamino, arylcarbonylamino,  
10 C<sub>2-6</sub> alkoxycarbonylamino, N-(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl-N-(C<sub>2-6</sub>)alkoxycarbonylamino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylsulphonylamino, arylsulphonylamino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylsulphonylaminomethyl, aminocarbonylamino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminocarbonylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminocarbonylamino, mono- or diarylaminocarbonylamino, pyrrolidinylcarbonylamino,  
15 piperidinylcarbonylamino, aminocarbonyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminocarbonyl, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminocarbonyl, aminosulphonyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminosulphonyl, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminosulphonyl, aminosulphonylmethyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminosulphonylmethyl and di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminosulphonylmethyl.

When R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup>, when linked through a nitrogen atom, together  
20 represent the residue of an azetidine, pyrrolidine, piperidine, morpholine or piperazine ring, this ring may be unsubstituted or substituted by one or more substituents. Examples of suitable substituents include C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkoxycarbonyl and C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminocarbonyl. Typical substituents include methyl, benzyl,  
25 methoxy, methoxycarbonyl, ethoxycarbonyl and methylaminocarbonyl. In particular, where R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> together represent the residue of a piperazine ring, this ring is preferably substituted on the distal nitrogen atom by a C<sub>2-6</sub> alkoxycarbonyl moiety such as methoxycarbonyl or ethoxycarbonyl.

As used herein, the expression "C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl" includes methyl and  
30 ethyl groups, and straight-chained or branched propyl, butyl, pentyl and hexyl groups. Particular alkyl groups are methyl, ethyl, n-propyl,

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isopropyl and *tert*-butyl. Derived expressions such as "C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy", "C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylthio" and "C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylamino" are to be construed accordingly.

The expression "C<sub>2-6</sub> alkenyl" as used herein refers to straight-chained and branched alkenyl groups containing from 2 to 6 carbon atoms.

5 Typical examples include vinyl, allyl, dimethylallyl and butenyl groups.

The expression "C<sub>2-6</sub> alkynyl" as used herein refers to straight-chained and branched alkynyl groups containing from 2 to 6 carbon atoms. Typical examples include ethynyl and propargyl groups.

10 Typical C<sub>3-7</sub> cycloalkyl groups include cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl and cyclohexyl.

Typical aryl groups include phenyl and naphthyl.

The expression "aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl" as used herein includes benzyl, phenylethyl, phenylpropyl and naphthylmethyl.

15 Suitable heterocycloalkyl groups include azetidinyl, pyrrolidinyl, piperidinyl, piperazinyl and morpholinyl groups.

Suitable heteroaryl groups include pyridinyl, quinolinyl, isoquinolinyl, pyridazinyl, pyrimidinyl, pyrazinyl, pyranyl, furyl, benzofuryl, dibenzofuryl, thienyl, benzthienyl, pyrrolyl, indolyl, pyrazolyl, indazolyl, oxazolyl, isoxazolyl, thiazolyl, isothiazolyl, imidazolyl, 20 benzimidazolyl, oxadiazolyl, thiadiazolyl, triazolyl and tetrazolyl groups.

25 The expression "heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl" as used herein includes furylmethyl, furylethyl, thienylmethyl, thienylethyl, oxazolylmethyl, oxazolyethyl, thiazolylmethyl, thiazolethyl, imidazolylmethyl, imidazolethyl, oxadiazolylmethyl, oxadiazolethyl, thiadiazolylmethyl, thiadiazolethyl, triazolylmethyl, triazolethyl, tetrazolylmethyl, tetrazolethyl, pyridinylmethyl, pyridinylethyl, pyridinylpropyl, pyrimidinylmethyl, pyrazinylmethyl, quinolinylmethyl and isoquinolinylmethyl.

30 The term "halogen" as used herein includes fluorine, chlorine, bromine and iodine, especially fluorine.

For use in medicine, the salts of the compounds of formula I will be pharmaceutically acceptable salts. Other salts may, however, be useful in the preparation of the compounds according to the invention or of their pharmaceutically acceptable salts. Suitable pharmaceutically acceptable salts of the compounds of this invention include acid addition salts which may, for example, be formed by mixing a solution of the compound according to the invention with a solution of a pharmaceutically acceptable acid such as hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid, methanesulphonic acid, fumaric acid, maleic acid, succinic acid, acetic acid, benzoic acid, oxalic acid, citric acid, tartaric acid, carbonic acid or phosphoric acid.

Furthermore, where the compounds of the invention carry an acidic moiety, suitable pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof may include alkali metal salts, e.g. sodium or potassium salts; alkaline earth metal salts, e.g. calcium or magnesium salts; and salts formed with suitable organic ligands, e.g. quaternary ammonium salts.

The present invention includes within its scope prodrugs of the compounds of formula I above. In general, such prodrugs will be functional derivatives of the compounds of formula I which are readily convertible *in vivo* into the required compound of formula I. Conventional procedures for the selection and preparation of suitable prodrug derivatives are described, for example, in *Design of Prodrugs*, ed. H. Bundgaard, Elsevier, 1985.

Where the compounds according to the invention have at least one asymmetric centre, they may accordingly exist as enantiomers. Where the compounds according to the invention possess two or more asymmetric centres, they may additionally exist as diastereoisomers. For example, the compounds of formula I above wherein Z represents a group of formula (Zb) or (Zc) have a chiral centre denoted by the asterisk \*, which may accordingly be in the (R) or (S) configuration. It is to be understood that all such isomers and mixtures thereof in any proportion are encompassed within the scope of the present invention.

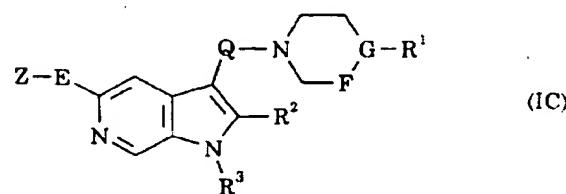
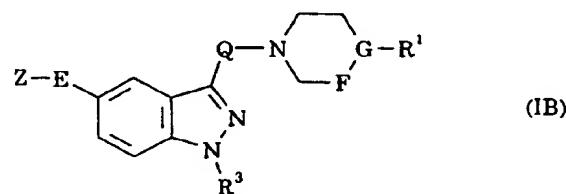
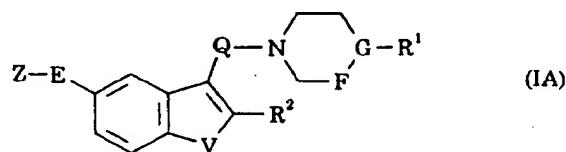
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The alkylene chain E may be, for example, methylene, ethylene, 1-methylethylene, propylene, 2-methylpropylene or butylene. In addition, E may represent a chemical bond such that the moiety Z is attached directly to the central fused bicyclic heteroaromatic ring system containing the variables T, U and V.

Suitably, E represents a chemical bond or a methylene linkage.

The alkylene chain Q is substituted in any position by one or more fluorine atoms, preferably by one or two fluorine atoms and more preferably by one fluorine atom. Representative alkylene chains for Q include 2-fluoropropylene, 2,2-difluoropropylene and 2-fluoromethyl-propylene, especially 2-fluoropropylene or 2-fluoromethyl-propylene.

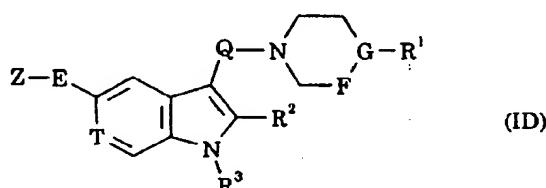
The compound of formula I in accordance with the present invention is suitably an indole, benzofuran or benzthiophene derivative of formula IA, an indazole derivative of formula IB, or a pyrrolo[2,3-c]pyridine derivative of formula IC:



- 10 -

wherein Z, E, Q, V, F, G, R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> are as defined above. Preferably, the compounds according to the invention are indole or pyrrolo[2,3-c]-pyridine derivatives of formula ID:

5



wherein Z, E, Q, T, F, G, R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> are as defined above, in particular wherein R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> are both hydrogen.

Suitable values for the substituent R<sup>1</sup> include allyl, dimethylallyl,  
 10 butenyl, propargyl, benzyl, phenylethyl, phenylpropyl, furylmethyl, thienylmethyl, thienylethyl, imidazolylmethyl, pyridinylmethyl and pyridinylpropyl, any of which groups may be optionally substituted. Selected values of R<sup>1</sup> include allyl, dimethylallyl, butenyl, propargyl, benzyl, phenylethyl, phenylpropyl, furylmethyl, thienylmethyl,  
 15 imidazolylmethyl and pyridinylmethyl, any of which groups may be optionally substituted. Typical substituents on the group R<sup>1</sup> include halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, triazolyl, tetrazolyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl-tetrazolyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy, amino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminomethyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkylcarbonylamino, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkoxycarbonylamino, N-(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl-N-(C<sub>2-6</sub>)alkoxycarbonylamino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylsulphonylamino, aminocarbonylamino, aminocarbonyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminocarbonyl, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminocarbonyl, aminosulphonyl and C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminosulphonylmethyl.  
 20

Representative values of R<sup>1</sup> include allyl, dimethylallyl, butenyl, propargyl, benzyl, fluorobenzyl, difluorobenzyl, cyanobenzyl, tetrazolyl-benzyl, methyltetrazolyl-benzyl, methoxybenzyl, aminobenzyl, dimethylaminomethyl-benzyl, acetylamino-benzyl, aminocarbonyl-benzyl, methylaminocarbonyl-benzyl, dimethylaminocarbonyl-benzyl,

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aminosulphonyl-benzyl, phenylethyl, fluoro-phenylethyl, difluoro-phenylethyl, trifluoromethyl-phenylethyl, cyano-phenylethyl, triazolyl-phenylethyl, amino-phenylethyl, dimethylamino-phenylethyl, acetylamino-phenylethyl, methoxycarbonylamino-phenylethyl, (*N*-methyl-*N*-methoxycarbonyl)amino-phenylethyl, aminocarbonylamino-phenylethyl, phenylpropyl, fluoro-phenylpropyl, furylmethyl, thienylmethyl, thienylethyl, imidazolylmethyl, pyridinylmethyl, pyridinylpropyl and amino-pyridylmethyl.

Particular values of R<sup>1</sup> include benzyl, phenylethyl, fluoro-phenylethyl, phenylpropyl (especially 2-phenylpropyl), fluoro-phenylpropyl (especially 2-(fluorophenyl)-propyl), thienylethyl, pyridinylmethyl and pyridinylpropyl (especially 2-(pyridinyl)-propyl).

Suitably, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> independently represent hydrogen or methyl, especially hydrogen.

Suitably, R<sup>4</sup> represents hydrogen or methyl, especially hydrogen. Suitably, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> are independently selected from hydrogen, methyl, ethyl, *n*-propyl, isopropyl, *n*-butyl, *tert*-butyl, trifluoromethyl, phenyl, methylphenyl (especially 4-methylphenyl), benzyl and phenethyl.

Suitably, the substituent Z represents hydrogen, fluoro, cyano.

hydroxy, methoxy, ethoxy, benzyloxy, methylamino-carbonyloxy, cyano-methoxy, aminocarbonyl-methoxy, methylsulphonyl, aminosulphonyl, *N*-methylamino-sulphonyl, *N,N*-dimethylamino-sulphonyl, amino, formylamino, acetylamino, trifluoromethyl-carbonylamino, benzyloxy-carbonylamino, methyl-sulphonylamino, ethyl-sulphonylamino,

methylphenyl-sulphonylamino, *N*-methyl-(*N*-methylsulphonyl)-amino, *N*-methyl-(*N*-ethylsulphonyl)-amino, *N*-methyl-(*N*-trifluoromethylsulphonyl)-amino, *N*-ethyl-(*N*-methylsulphonyl)-amino, *N*-benzyl-(*N*-methylsulphonyl)-amino, *N*-benzyl-(*N*-ethylsulphonyl)-amino, acetyl, methoxycarbonyl, ethoxycarbonyl, aminocarbonyl,

methylaminocarbonyl, ethylaminocarbonyl, propylaminocarbonyl, butylaminocarbonyl, benzylaminocarbonyl or phenethyl-aminocarbonyl; or

a group of formula (Za), (Zb), (Zc) or (Zd) as defined above; or an optionally substituted five-membered heteroaromatic ring as specified above.

In a particular embodiment, Z represents  $\text{-SO}_2\text{NR}^5\text{R}^6$  in which R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> are as defined above. In a subset of this embodiment, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> independently represent hydrogen or C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, especially hydrogen or methyl. Particular values of Z in this context include aminosulphonyl, N-methylamino-sulphonyl and N,N-dimethylamino-sulphonyl, especially N-methylamino-sulphonyl.

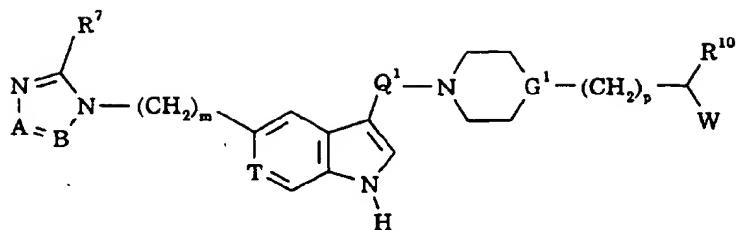
In another embodiment, Z represents a group of formula (Zb) in which R<sup>4</sup> is hydrogen or methyl. In a subset of this embodiment, X and Y both represent oxygen. In a particular aspect of this subset, the chiral centre denoted by the asterisk \* is in the (S) configuration.

When the group Z represents an optionally substituted five-membered heteroaromatic ring, this is suitably a 1,3-oxazole, 1,3-thiazole, imidazole, 1,2,4-oxadiazole, 1,3,4-oxadiazole, 1,2,4-thiadiazole, 1,3,4-thiadiazole, 1,2,3-triazole, 1,2,4-triazole or tetrazole ring. Preferably, the ring is a 1,3-oxazole, 1,3-thiazole, 1,2,4-oxadiazole, 1,2,4-thiadiazole or 1,2,4-triazole ring, in particular a 1,2,4-triazol-1-yl or 1,2,4-triazol-4-yl moiety.

Suitably, the five-membered heteroaromatic ring Z is unsubstituted. Examples of optional substituents which may typically be attached to the moiety Z include methyl, ethyl, benzyl and amino.

A particular sub-class of compounds according to the invention is represented by the compounds of formula II A, and salts and prodrugs thereof:

- 13 -



(IIA)

wherein

m is zero, 1, 2 or 3, preferably zero or 1;

5 p is zero, 1 or 2;

Q¹ represents a straight or branched alkylene chain containing from 2 to 5 carbon atoms, substituted in any position by one or more fluorine atoms;

T represents nitrogen or CH;

10 G¹ represents nitrogen or CH;

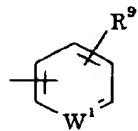
A represents nitrogen or CH;

B represents nitrogen or C-R⁸;

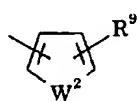
R⁷ and R⁸ independently represent hydrogen, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkenyl, C<sub>3-7</sub> cycloalkyl, aryl, aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, C<sub>3-7</sub> heterocycloalkyl,

15 heteroaryl, heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylthio, amino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylamino, halogen, cyano or trifluoromethyl;

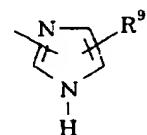
W represents a group of formula (Wa), (Wb) or (Wc):



(Wa)



(Wb)



(Wc)

20

in which

W¹ represents CH or nitrogen;

- 14 -

$W^2$  represents oxygen, sulphur, NH or N-methyl;

$R^9$  represents hydrogen, halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, triazolyl, tetrazolyl,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl-tetrazolyl,  $C_{1-6}$  alkoxy,  $C_{2-6}$  alkylcarbonyl, amino,  $C_{1-6}$  alkylamino, di( $C_{1-6}$ )alkylamino, di( $C_{1-6}$ )alkylaminomethyl,  $C_{2-6}$

5        alkylcarbonylamino,  $C_{1-6}$  alkylsulphonylamino, aminocarbonylamino,  $C_{1-6}$  alkylaminocarbonyl, aminosulphonyl or  $C_{1-6}$  alkylaminosulphonylmethyl; and

$R^{10}$  represents hydrogen or  $C_{1-3}$  alkyl.

Suitably,  $Q^1$  represents a straight or branched 3 or 4 carbon  
10      alkylene chain, substituted in any position by one or two fluorine atoms. Where the alkylene linkage  $Q^1$  is substituted by two fluorine atoms, the *gem* difluoro substitution pattern is preferred. Particular alkylene chains for  $Q^1$  include 2-fluoropropylene, 2,2-difluoropropylene and 2-(fluoromethyl)-propylene, especially 2-fluoropropylene or 2-(fluoromethyl)-  
15      propylene.

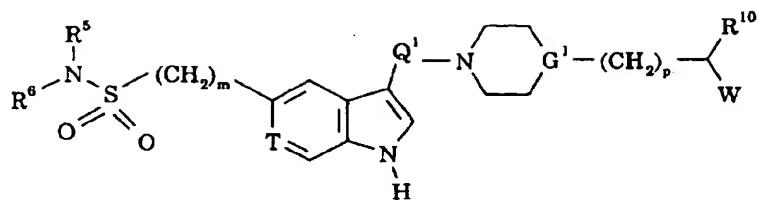
Particular values of  $R^7$  and  $R^8$  include hydrogen, methyl, ethyl, benzyl and amino, especially hydrogen.

Particular values of  $R^9$  include hydrogen, fluoro, cyano, triazolyl, tetrazolyl, methyl-tetrazolyl, methoxy, amino, dimethylaminomethyl,  
20      acetylamino, aminocarbonylamino, methylaminocarbonyl and aminosulphonyl, especially hydrogen or fluoro.

Particular values of  $R^{10}$  include hydrogen and methyl.

Another sub-class of compounds according to the invention is represented by the compounds of formula IIB, and salts and prodrugs  
25      thereof:

- 15 -



(IIB)

wherein

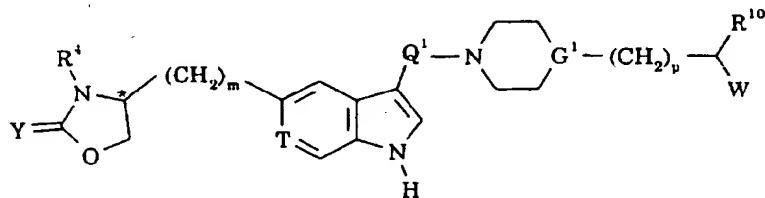
$m$ ,  $p$ ,  $Q^1$ ,  $T$ ,  $G^1$ ,  $W$  and  $R^{10}$  are as defined with reference to formula

5 IIA above; and

$R^5$  and  $R^6$  are as defined with reference to formula I above.

Particular values of  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  in relation to formula IIA above include hydrogen and C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, especially hydrogen or methyl. Suitably, one of  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  represents hydrogen and the other represents hydrogen or 10 methyl.

A further sub-class of compounds according to the invention is represented by the compounds of formula IIC, and salts and prodrugs thereof:



15

(IIC)

wherein the asterisk \* denotes a chiral centre;

$m$ ,  $p$ ,  $Q^1$ ,  $T$ ,  $G^1$ ,  $W$  and  $R^{10}$  are as defined with reference to formula IIA above; and

20  $R^4$  and  $Y$  are as defined with reference to formula I above.

Particular values of R<sup>4</sup> in relation to formula IIC include hydrogen and methyl.

Preferably, Y in formula IIC is oxygen.

Preferably, the chiral centre denoted by the asterisk \* in formula  
5 IIC is in the (S) configuration.

Specific compounds within the scope of the present invention include:

4-benzyl-1-[2-fluoromethyl-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

10 4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-benzyl-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperidine;

15 4-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

20 4-[2-(4-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-(2-phenylethyl)-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

25 4-(2-phenylpropyl)-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

30 4-[2-(4-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(3-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(4-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-  
yl)propyl]piperazine;

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4-[2-(2-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[(*S*)-2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

5 4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[(*R*)-2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-(2-phenylpropyl)-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

10 4-[2-(4-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(2-thienyl)ethyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

15 4-[2-(3-thienyl)ethyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[(*S*)-2-phenylpropyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(3-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

20 and salts and prodrugs thereof.

The invention also provides pharmaceutical compositions comprising one or more compounds of this invention in association with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier. Preferably these compositions are in unit dosage forms such as tablets, pills, capsules, powders, granules, sterile parenteral solutions or suspensions, metered aerosol or liquid sprays, drops, ampoules, auto-injector devices or suppositories; for oral, parenteral, intranasal, sublingual or rectal administration, or for administration by inhalation or insufflation. For preparing solid compositions such as tablets, the principal active ingredient is mixed with a pharmaceutical carrier, e.g. conventional tableting ingredients such as

corn starch, lactose, sucrose, sorbitol, talc, stearic acid, magnesium stearate, dicalcium phosphate or gums, and other pharmaceutical diluents, e.g. water, to form a solid preformulation composition containing a homogeneous mixture of a compound of the present invention, or a

5 pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof. When referring to these preformulation compositions as homogeneous, it is meant that the active ingredient is dispersed evenly throughout the composition so that the composition may be readily subdivided into equally effective unit dosage forms such as tablets, pills and capsules. This solid preformulation

10 composition is then subdivided into unit dosage forms of the type described above containing from 0.1 to about 500 mg of the active ingredient of the present invention. Typical unit dosage forms contain from 1 to 100 mg, for example 1, 2, 5, 10, 25, 50 or 100 mg, of the active ingredient. The tablets or pills of the novel composition can be coated or otherwise compounded to

15 provide a dosage form affording the advantage of prolonged action. For example, the tablet or pill can comprise an inner dosage and an outer dosage component, the latter being in the form of an envelope over the former. The two components can be separated by an enteric layer which serves to resist disintegration in the stomach and permits the inner

20 component to pass intact into the duodenum or to be delayed in release. A variety of materials can be used for such enteric layers or coatings, such materials including a number of polymeric acids and mixtures of polymeric acids with such materials as shellac, cetyl alcohol and cellulose acetate.

The liquid forms in which the novel compositions of the present

25 invention may be incorporated for administration orally or by injection include aqueous solutions, suitably flavoured syrups, aqueous or oil suspensions, and flavoured emulsions with edible oils such as cottonseed oil, sesame oil, coconut oil or peanut oil, as well as elixirs and similar pharmaceutical vehicles. Suitable dispersing or suspending agents for

30 aqueous suspensions include synthetic and natural gums such as

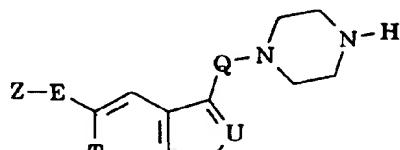
- 19 -

tragacanth, acacia, alginate, dextran, sodium carboxymethylcellulose, methylcellulose, polyvinyl-pyrrolidone or gelatin.

In the treatment of migraine, a suitable dosage level is about 0.01 to 250 mg/kg per day, preferably about 0.05 to 100 mg/kg per day, and  
 5 especially about 0.05 to 5 mg/kg per day. The compounds may be administered on a regimen of 1 to 4 times per day.

The compounds according to the invention wherein -F-G- represents -CH<sub>2</sub>-N- may be prepared by a process which comprises attachment of the R<sup>1</sup> moiety to a compound of formula III:

10



(III)

wherein Z, E, Q, T, U and V are as defined above; by conventional means including N-alkylation.

15 Attachment of the R<sup>1</sup> moiety to the compounds of formula III may conveniently be effected by standard alkylation techniques. One example thereof comprises treatment with an alkenyl halide such as 4-bromobut-1-ene, 4-bromo-2-methylbut-2-ene or allyl bromide, an alkynyl halide such as propargyl bromide, or an aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl halide  
 20 such as benzyl iodide, typically under basic conditions, e.g. sodium hydride or potassium carbonate in *N,N*-dimethylformamide, or triethylamine in acetonitrile. Another example comprises treatment of the compound of formula III with an aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl mesylate such as 2-(4-cyanophenyl)ethyl methanesulphonate or 2-(2- or 3-thienyl)ethyl  
 25 methanesulphonate, typically in the presence of sodium carbonate or potassium carbonate and optionally sodium iodide, in a suitable solvent such as 1,2-dimethoxyethane or *N,N*-dimethylformamide.

- 20 -

Alternatively, the R<sup>1</sup> moiety may conveniently be attached by reductive alkylation, which may be accomplished in a single step, or as a two-step procedure. The single-step approach suitably comprises treating the required compound of formula III as defined above with the

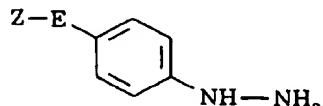
5 appropriate aldehyde, e.g. benzaldehyde, (3-fluorophenyl)acetaldehyde, furfuraldehyde or thiophene carboxaldehyde, in the presence of a reducing agent such as sodium cyanoborohydride. In a typical two-step procedure, for the preparation of a compound of formula I wherein R<sup>1</sup> corresponds to a group of formula -CH<sub>2</sub>R<sup>11</sup>, a carboxylic acid derivative of formula R<sup>11</sup>-CO<sub>2</sub>H

10 is condensed with the required compound of formula III, suitably in the presence of 1-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-3-ethylcarbodiimide hydrochloride and 1-hydroxybenzotriazole hydrate, to afford a compound corresponding to formula I wherein R<sup>1</sup> represents -COR<sup>11</sup>; the carbonyl group thereof can then be reduced, for example by treatment with diisobutylaluminium

15 hydride, and the required compound of formula I thereby obtained.

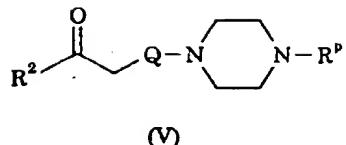
The compounds of formula III above wherein T represents CH, U represents C-R<sup>2</sup> and V represents N-R<sup>3</sup>, corresponding to the indole derivatives of formula ID as defined above wherein T represents CH, -F-G-represents -CH<sub>2</sub>-N- and R<sup>1</sup> is hydrogen, may be prepared by a process

20 which comprises reacting a compound of formula IV:



wherein Z and E are as defined above; with a compound of formula V, or a carbonyl-protected form thereof:

- 21 -



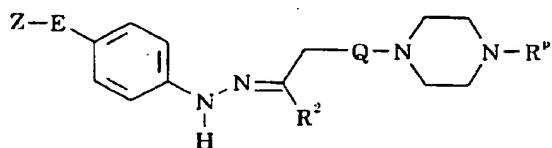
wherein  $\text{R}^2$  and  $\text{Q}$  are as defined above, and  $\text{R}^p$  represents an amino-protecting group; followed, where required, by N-alkylation by standard methods to introduce the moiety  $\text{R}^3$ , with subsequent removal of the amino-protecting group  $\text{R}^p$ .

The reaction between compounds IV and V, which is an example of the well-known Fischer indole synthesis, is suitably carried out by heating the reagents together under mildly acidic conditions, e.g. 4% sulphuric acid at reflux.

Suitable carbonyl-protected forms of the compounds of formula V include the dimethyl acetal or ketal derivatives.

The protecting group  $\text{R}^p$  in the compounds of formula V is suitably a carbamoyl moiety such as *tert*-butoxycarbonyl (BOC), which can conveniently be removed as necessary by treatment under mildly acidic conditions. Indeed, the acidic conditions of the Fischer indole synthesis reaction will generally suffice to remove the BOC group.

The Fischer reaction between compounds IV and V may be carried out in a single step, or may proceed via an initial non-cyclising step at a lower temperature to give an intermediate of formula VI:

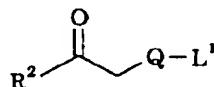


(VI)

wherein Z, E, Q,  $\text{R}^2$  and  $\text{R}^p$  are as defined above; followed by cyclisation using a suitable reagent, e.g. a polyphosphate ester.

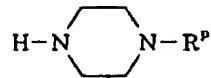
- 22 -

The intermediates of formula V, or carbonyl-protected forms thereof, may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula VII, or a carbonyl-protected form thereof, with a compound of formula VIII:



5

(VII)



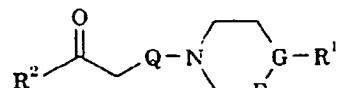
(VIII)

wherein Q, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>p</sup> are as defined above, and L<sup>1</sup> represents a suitable leaving group.

10 The leaving group L<sup>1</sup> is suitably a halogen atom, e.g. chlorine or bromine.

Where L<sup>1</sup> represents a halogen atom, the reaction between compounds VII and VIII is conveniently effected by stirring the reactants under basic conditions in a suitable solvent, for example potassium carbonate in *N,N*-dimethylformamide, or triethylamine in tetrahydrofuran or acetonitrile.

15 The compounds according to the invention wherein T represents CH, U represents C-R<sup>2</sup> and V represents N-R<sup>3</sup> - i.e. the indole derivatives of formula ID as defined above wherein T represents CH - may alternatively be prepared by a process which comprises reacting a 20 compound of formula IV as defined above with a compound of formula IX, or a carbonyl-protected form thereof:



(IX)

25 wherein Q, F, G, R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are as defined above: under conditions analogous to those described above for the reaction between compounds IV

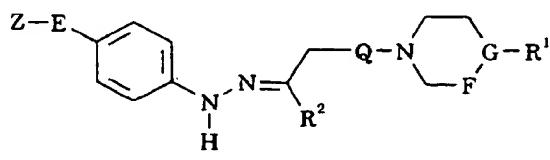
- 23 -

and V; followed, where required, by N-alkylation by standard methods to introduce the moiety R<sup>3</sup>.

As for the compounds of formula V, suitable carbonyl-protected forms of the compounds of formula IX include the dimethyl acetal or ketal derivatives.

As with that between compounds IV and V, the Fischer reaction between compounds IV and IX may be carried out in a single step, or may proceed via an initial non-cyclising step at a lower temperature to give an intermediate of formula X:

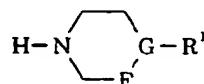
10



(X)

wherein Z, E, Q, F, G, R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are as defined above; followed by cyclisation using a suitable reagent, e.g. a polyphosphate ester.

15 The intermediates of formula IX, or carbonyl-protected forms thereof, may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula VII as defined above, or a carbonyl-protected form thereof, with a compound of formula XI:

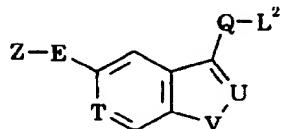


20

(XI)

wherein F, G and R<sup>1</sup> are as defined above; under conditions analogous to those described above for the reaction between compounds VII and VIII.

In an alternative procedure, the compounds of formula III above may be prepared by a process which comprises reacting a compound of formula VIII as defined above with a compound of formula XII:



5

(XII)

wherein Z, E, Q, T, U and V are as defined above, and L<sup>2</sup> represents a suitable leaving group; followed by removal of the amino-protecting group R<sup>p</sup>.

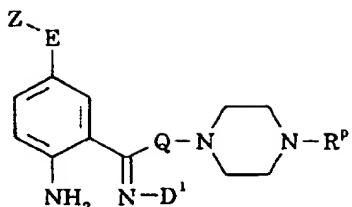
10 Similarly, the compounds of formula I as defined above may be prepared by a process which comprises reacting a compound of formula XI as defined above with a compound of formula XII as defined above.

The leaving group L<sup>2</sup> is suitably an alkylsulphonyloxy or arylsulphonyloxy group, e.g. methanesulphonyloxy (mesyloxy),  
15 trifluoromethanesulphonyloxy (triflyoxy) or p-toluenesulphonyloxy (tosyloxy).

Where L<sup>2</sup> represents an alkylsulphonyloxy or arylsulphonyloxy group, the reaction between compound XII and compound VIII or XI is conveniently carried out in a suitable solvent such as 1,2-dimethoxyethane, isopropyl alcohol or N,N-dimethylformamide, typically in the presence of a base such as sodium carbonate or potassium carbonate, optionally with the addition of sodium iodide.

In a further procedure, the compounds of formula III above wherein T represents CH, U represents nitrogen and V represents N-R<sup>3</sup>,  
25 corresponding to the indazole derivatives of formula IB as defined above wherein -F-G- represents -CH<sub>2</sub>-N- and R<sup>1</sup> is hydrogen, may be prepared by a process which comprises cyclising a compound of formula XIII:

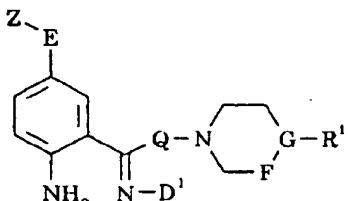
- 25 -



(XIII)

wherein Z, E, Q and R<sup>p</sup> are as defined above, and D<sup>1</sup> represents a readily  
 5 displaceable group; followed, where required, by N-alkylation by standard  
 methods to introduce the moiety R<sup>3</sup>; with subsequent removal of the  
 amino-protecting group R<sup>p</sup>.

Similarly, the compounds of formula I wherein T represents CH, U  
 represents nitrogen and V represents N-R<sup>3</sup> - i.e. the indazole derivatives of  
 10 formula IB as defined above - may be prepared by a process which  
 comprises cyclising a compound of formula XIV:



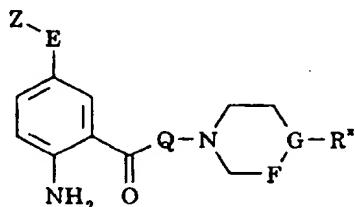
(XIV)

15 in which Z, E, Q, F, G, R<sup>1</sup> and D<sup>1</sup> are as defined above; followed, where  
 required, by N-alkylation by standard methods to introduce the moiety R<sup>3</sup>.

The cyclisation of compounds XIII and XIV is conveniently achieved  
 in a suitable organic solvent at an elevated temperature, for example in a  
 mixture of *m*-xylene and 2,6-lutidine at a temperature in the region of  
 20 140°C.

- 26 -

The readily displaceable group D<sup>1</sup> in the compounds of formula XIII and XIV suitably represents a C<sub>1-4</sub> alkanoyloxy group, preferably acetoxy. Where D<sup>1</sup> represents acetoxy, the desired compound of formula XIII or XIV may be conveniently prepared by treating a carbonyl compound of formula  
 5 XV:

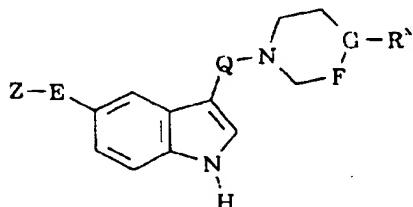


(XV)

wherein Z, E, Q, F and G are as defined above, and Rx corresponds to the  
 10 group R<sup>1</sup> as defined above, or Rx represents an amino-protecting group as defined for Rx when -F-G- represents -CH<sub>2</sub>-N-; or a protected derivative thereof, preferably the N-formyl protected derivative; with hydroxylamine hydrochloride, advantageously in pyridine at the reflux temperature of the solvent; followed by acetylation with acetic anhydride, advantageously in  
 15 the presence of a catalytic quantity of 4-dimethylaminopyridine, in dichloromethane at room temperature.

The N-formyl protected derivatives of the intermediates of formula XV may conveniently be prepared by ozonolysis of the corresponding indole derivative of formula XVI:

20



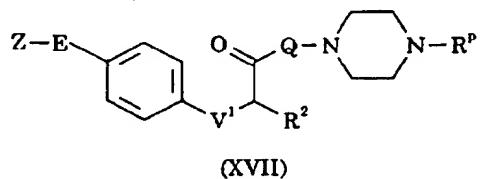
(XVI)

- 27 -

wherein Z, E, Q, F, G and R<sup>x</sup> are as defined above; followed by a reductive work-up, advantageously using dimethylsulphide.

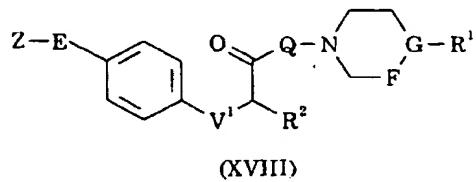
The indole derivatives of formula XVI may be prepared by methods analogous to those described in the accompanying Examples, or by 5 procedures well known from the art.

In a still further procedure, the compounds of formula III above wherein T represents CH, U represents C-R<sup>2</sup> and V represents oxygen or sulphur, corresponding to the benzofuran or benzthiophene derivatives of formula IA wherein V is oxygen or sulphur respectively, -F-G- represents 10 -CH<sub>2</sub>-N- and R<sup>1</sup> is hydrogen, may be prepared by a process which comprises cyclising a compound of formula XVII:



15 wherein Z, E, Q, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> are as defined above, and V¹ represents oxygen or sulphur; followed by removal of the amino-protecting group R<sup>3</sup>.

Similarly, the compounds of formula I wherein T represents CH, U represents C-R<sup>2</sup> and V represents oxygen or sulphur - i.e. the benzofuran or benzthiophene derivatives of formula IA above - may be prepared by a 20 process which comprises cyclising a compound of formula XVIII:

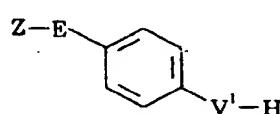


wherein Z, E, Q, F, G, R¹, R² and V¹ are as defined above.

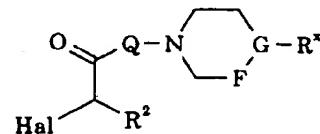
- 28 -

The cyclisation of compounds XVII and XVIII is conveniently effected by using polyphosphoric acid or a polyphosphate ester, advantageously at an elevated temperature.

5      The compounds of formula XVII and XVIII may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula XIX with a compound of formula XX:



(XIX)



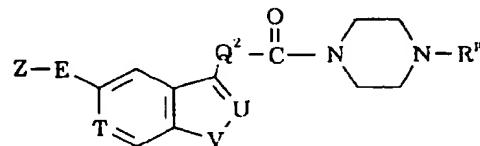
(XX)

wherein Z, E, Q, F, G, R¹, V¹ and R² are as defined above, and Hal  
10     represents a halogen atom.

The reaction is conveniently effected in the presence of a base such as sodium hydroxide.

15     The hydroxy and mercapto derivatives of formula XIX may be prepared by a variety of methods which will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art. One such method is described in EP-A-0497512.

In a yet further procedure, the compounds of formula III above may be prepared by a process which comprises reducing a compound of formula XXI:



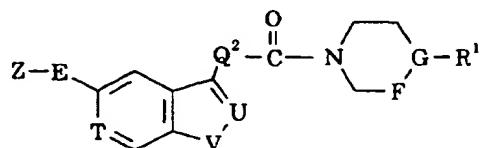
20

(XXI)

wherein Z, E, T, U, V and R² are as defined above, and -Q²-CH₂- corresponds to the moiety Q as defined above; with subsequent removal of the amino-protecting group R².

- 29 -

Similarly, the compounds according to the invention may be prepared by a process which comprises reducing a compound of formula XXII:



5

(XXII)

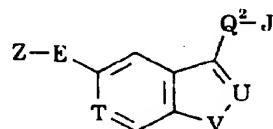
wherein Z, E, T, U, V, F, G, R<sup>1</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup> are as defined above.

The reduction of compounds XXI and XXII is conveniently effected by treating the appropriate compound with a reducing agent such as

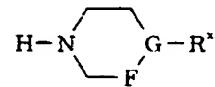
10 lithium aluminium hydride in an appropriate solvent, e.g. diethyl ether or tetrahydrofuran, or mixtures thereof.

The compounds of formulae XXI and XXII above may suitably be prepared by reacting a compound of formula XXIII with the appropriate compound of formula XXIV:

15



(XXIII)



(XXIV)

wherein Z, E, T, U, V, F, G, R<sup>2</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup> are as defined above, and J represents a reactive carboxylate moiety.

20 Suitable values for the reactive carboxylate moiety J include esters, for example C<sub>1-4</sub> alkyl esters; acid anhydrides, for example mixed anhydrides with C<sub>1-4</sub> alkanoic acids; acid halides, for example acid chlorides; and acylimidazoles.

- 30 -

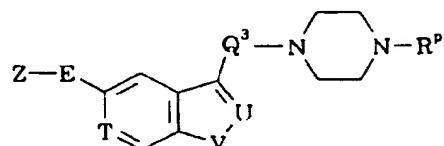
By way of example, the intermediates of formula XXIII above wherein J is an acid chloride moiety may be prepared by treating the corresponding carboxylic acid derivative with thionyl chloride in toluene.

Similarly, the intermediates of formula XXIII wherein J is an

- 5 acylimidazole moiety may be prepared by treating the corresponding carboxylic acid derivative with 1,1'-carbonyldiimidazole. Alternatively, the reactive carboxylate moiety J may be obtained by treating the corresponding compound wherein J is carboxy with 1-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-3-ethylcarbodiimide hydrochloride and 1-
- 10 hydroxybenzotriazole hydrate, optionally in the presence of triethylamine; the resulting activated carboxylate intermediate may then suitably be reacted *in situ* with the required compound of formula XXIV.

In a still further procedure, the compounds of formula III above may be prepared by a process which comprises reacting a compound of formula

- 15 XXV:



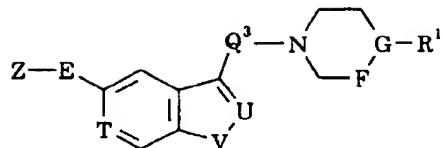
(XXV)

wherein Z, E, T, U, V and R<sup>p</sup> are as defined above, and Q<sup>3</sup> corresponds to

- 20 the moiety Q as defined above in which one or each fluorine atom is replaced by a leaving group; with an available source of fluoride ion; with subsequent removal of the amino-protecting group R<sup>p</sup>.

Similarly, the compounds according to the invention may be prepared by a process which comprises reacting a compound of formula

- 25 XXVI:



wherein Z, E, T, U, V, F, G, R<sup>1</sup> and Q<sup>3</sup> are as defined above; with an available source of fluoride ion.

5        The source of fluoride ion for use in the above reaction with compounds XXV and XXVI is suitably tetra-*n*-butylammonium fluoride, in which case the reaction is conveniently carried out in a solvent such as *N,N*-dimethylformamide at an elevated temperature.

10      The leaving group present in the moiety Q<sup>3</sup> in compounds XXV or XXVI is suitably an alkylsulphonyloxy or arylsulphonyloxy group such as mesyloxy or tosyloxy, preferably mesyloxy. Where this group is mesyloxy, the appropriate compound of formula XXV or XXVI can conveniently be obtained by treatment of the corresponding hydroxy compound with mesyl chloride in the presence of triethylamine, in a solvent such as tetrahydrofuran. The required hydroxy precursor can in turn be prepared by methods analogous to those described above for the preparation of the compounds of formula III and I respectively.

15      The hydrazine derivatives of formula IV above may be prepared by methods analogous to those described in EP-A-0438230, EP-A-0497512, EP-A-0548813 and WO-A-91/18897.

20      Where they are not commercially available, the starting materials of formula VII, VIII, XI, XII, XX and XXIV may be prepared by methods analogous to those described in the accompanying Examples, or by standard procedures well known from the art.

25      It will be understood that any compound of formula I initially obtained from any of the above processes may, where appropriate, subsequently be elaborated into a further compound of formula I by

techniques known from the art. For example, a compound of formula I wherein -F-G- represents -CH=C- initially obtained may be readily converted into the corresponding compound wherein -F-G- represents -CH<sub>2</sub>-CH- by conventional catalytic hydrogenation procedures. In

5 addition, a compound of formula I wherein R<sup>1</sup> is benzyl initially obtained may be converted by catalytic hydrogenation to the corresponding compound of formula III, which in turn may be converted into a further compound of formula I using standard N-alkylation techniques as described above. Furthermore, a compound of formula I initially obtained

10 wherein the R<sup>1</sup> moiety is substituted by nitro or cyano may be converted by catalytic hydrogenation to the corresponding amino- or aminomethyl-substituted compound respectively. Additionally, a compound of formula I wherein the R<sup>1</sup> moiety is substituted by hydroxy, possibly obtained by lithium aluminium hydride reduction of a precursor alkoxy carbonyl

15 derivative, may be mesylated under standard conditions, and the mesyl group subsequently displaced by an amino moiety by treatment with the desired amine in a sealed tube at an elevated temperature. The amine derivative resulting from any of these procedures may then, for example, be N-acylated using the appropriate acyl halide, e.g. acetyl chloride; or

20 aminocarbonylated, using potassium isocyanate, to the corresponding urea derivative; or converted to a 1,2,4-triazol-4-yl derivative using *N,N*-dimethylformamide azine; or reductively alkylated by treatment with the appropriate aldehyde or ketone in the presence of sodium cyanoborohydride. If desired, the amine derivative may also be

25 carbamoylated by treatment with the requisite alkyl chloroformate. A compound of formula I initially obtained wherein the R<sup>1</sup> moiety is substituted by cyano may be converted, by treatment with sodium azide, to the corresponding tetrazole derivative, which in turn may be alkylated on the tetrazole ring by treatment with an alkyl halide under standard

30 conditions. By way of additional illustration, a compound of formula I initially obtained wherein the R<sup>1</sup> moiety is substituted by an

alkoxycarbonyl moiety may be saponified, by treatment with an alkali metal hydroxide, to the corresponding carboxy-substituted compound, which in turn may be converted to an amide derivative by treatment with the appropriate amine, advantageously in the presence of 1-(3-

5 dimethylaminopropyl)-3-ethylcarbodiimide hydrochloride and 1-hydroxybenzotriazole. Moreover, a compound of formula I wherein R<sup>3</sup> is hydrogen initially obtained may be converted into a compound of formula I wherein R<sup>3</sup> represents C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl by standard alkylation techniques, for example by treatment with an alkyl iodide, e.g. methyl iodide, typically

10 under basic conditions, e.g. sodium hydride in *N,N*-dimethylformamide.

Where the above-described processes for the preparation of the compounds according to the invention give rise to mixtures of stereoisomers, these isomers may be separated by conventional techniques such as preparative chromatography. The novel compounds may be

15 prepared in racemic form, or individual enantiomers may be prepared either by enantiospecific synthesis or by resolution. The novel compounds may, for example, be resolved into their component enantiomers by standard techniques such as preparative HPLC, or the formation of diastereomeric pairs by salt formation with an optically active acid, such

20 as (-)-di-*p*-toluoyl-d-tartaric acid and/or (+)-di-*p*-toluoyl-l-tartaric acid, followed by fractional crystallization and regeneration of the free base. The novel compounds may also be resolved by formation of diastereomeric esters or amides, followed by chromatographic separation and removal of the chiral auxiliary.

25 During any of the above synthetic sequences it may be necessary and/or desirable to protect sensitive or reactive groups on any of the molecules concerned. This may be achieved by means of conventional protecting groups, such as those described in *Protective Groups in Organic Chemistry*, ed. J.F.W. McOmie, Plenum Press, 1973; and T.W. Greene &

30 P.G.M. Wuts, *Protective Groups in Organic Synthesis*, John Wiley & Sons,

1991. The protecting groups may be removed at a convenient subsequent stage using methods known from the art.

The following Examples illustrate the preparation of compounds according to the invention.

5       The compounds in accordance with the present invention potently and selectively bind to the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> receptor subtype, inhibit forskolin-stimulated adenylyl cyclase activity, and stimulate [<sup>35</sup>S]-GTP<sub>γ</sub>S binding to membranes from clonal cell lines expressing human cloned receptors.

10      5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub>/5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> Radioligand Binding

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Chinese hamster ovary (CHO) clonal cell lines expressing the human 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> and 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>b</sub></sub> receptors were harvested in PBS and homogenised in ice cold 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.7 at room temperature) 15 with a Kinematica polytron and centrifuged at 48,000g at 4°C for 11 min. The pellet was then resuspended in 50 mM Tris-HCl followed by a 10 min incubation at 37°C. Finally the tissue was recentrifuged at 48,000g, 4°C for 11 min and the pellet resuspended, in assay buffer (composition in mM: Tris-HCl 50, pargyline 0.01, CaCl<sub>2</sub> 4; ascorbate 0.1%; pH 7.7 at room 20 temperature) to give the required volume immediately prior to use (0.2 mg protein/ml). Incubations were carried out for 30 min at 37°C in the presence of 0.02-150 nM [<sup>3</sup>H]-5-HT for saturation studies or 2-5 nM [<sup>3</sup>H]-5-HT for displacement studies. The final assay volume was 1 ml. 5-HT (10 μM) was used to define non-specific binding. The reaction was initiated by 25 the addition of membrane and was terminated by rapid filtration through Whatman GF/B filters (presoaked in 0.3% PEI/ 0.5% Triton X) followed by 2 x 4 ml washings with 50 mM Tris-HCl. The radioactive filters were then counted on a LKB beta or a Wallac beta plate counter. Binding parameters were determined by non-linear, least squares regression 30 analysis using an iterative curve fitting routine, from which IC<sub>50</sub> (the molar concentration of compound necessary to inhibit binding by 50%)

values could be calculated for each test compound. The IC<sub>50</sub> values for binding to the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>α</sub></sub> receptor subtype obtained for the compounds of the accompanying Examples were below 50 nM in each case. Furthermore, the compounds of the accompanying Examples were all found to possess a 5 selective affinity for the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>α</sub></sub> receptor subtype of at least 10-fold relative to the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>β</sub></sub> subtype.

#### 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>α</sub></sub>/5-HT<sub>1D<sub>β</sub></sub> Adenylyl Cyclase Assay

10       Studies were performed essentially as described in *J. Pharmacol. Exp. Ther.*, 1986, 238, 248. CHO clonal cell lines expressing the human cloned 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>α</sub></sub> and 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>β</sub></sub> receptors were harvested in PBS and homogenised, using a motor driven teflon/glass homogeniser, in ice cold Tris HCl-EGTA buffer (composition in mM: Tris HCl 10, EGTA 1, pH 8.0 15 at room temperature) and incubated on ice for 30-60 min. The tissue was then centrifuged at 20,000g for 20 min at 4°C, the supernatant discarded and the pellet resuspended in Tris HCl-EDTA buffer (composition in mM: Tris HCl 50, EDTA 5, pH 7.6 at room temperature) just prior to assay. The adenylyl cyclase activity was determined by measuring the conversion 20 of α-[<sup>33</sup>P]-ATP to [<sup>33</sup>P]-cyclic AMP. A 10 µl aliquot of the membrane suspension was incubated, for 10-15 min, in a final volume of 50 µl, at 30°C, with or without forskolin (10 µM), in the presence or absence of test compound. The incubation buffer consisted of 50 mM Tris HCl (pH 7.6 at room temperature), 100 mM NaCl, 30 µM GTP, 50 µM cyclic AMP, 1 mM 25 dithiothreitol, 1 mM ATP, 5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 mM EGTA, 1 mM 3-isobutyl-1-methylxanthine, 3.5 mM creatinine phosphate, 0.2 mg/ml creatine phosphokinase, 0.5-1 µCi α-[<sup>33</sup>P]-ATP and 1 nCi [<sup>3</sup>H]-cyclic AMP. The 30 incubation was initiated by the addition of membrane, following a 5 min preincubation at 30°C, and was terminated by the addition of 100 µl SDS (composition in mM: sodium lauryl sulphate 2%, ATP 45, cyclic AMP 1.3, pH 7.5 at room temperature). The ATP and cyclic AMP were separated on

a double column chromatography system (*Anal. Biochem.*, 1974, **58**, 541). Functional parameters were determined using a least squares curve fitting programme ALLFIT (*Am. J. Physiol.*, 1978, **235**, E97) from which  $E_{max}$  (maximal effect) and  $EC_{50}$  (the molar concentration of compound necessary to inhibit the maximal effect by 50%) values were obtained for each test compound. Of those compounds which were tested in this assay, the  $EC_{50}$  values for the  $5-HT_{1D_\alpha}$  receptor obtained for the compounds of the accompanying Examples were below 500 nM in each case. Moreover, the compounds of the accompanying Examples which were tested were all necessary to inhibit the maximal effect by 50% values were obtained for each test compound. Of those compounds which were tested in this assay, the  $EC_{50}$  values for the  $5-HT_{1D_\alpha}$  receptor obtained for the compounds of the accompanying Examples were below 500 nM in each case. Moreover, the compounds of the accompanying Examples which were tested were all found to possess at least a 10-fold selectivity for the  $5-HT_{1D_\alpha}$  receptor subtype relative to the  $5-HT_{1D_\beta}$  subtype.

#### $5-HT_{1D_\alpha}/5-HT_{1D_\beta}$ GTP $\gamma$ S Binding

Studies were performed essentially as described in *Br. J. Pharmacol.*, 1993, **109**, 1120. CHO clonal cell lines expressing the human cloned  $5-HT_{1D_\alpha}$  and  $5-HT_{1D_\beta}$  receptors were harvested in PBS and homogenised using a Kinematica polytron in ice cold 20 mM HEPES containing 10 mM EDTA, pH 7.4 at room temperature. The membranes were then centrifuged at 40,000g, 4°C for 15 min. The pellet was then resuspended in ice cold 20 mM HEPES containing 0.1 mM EDTA, pH 7.4 at room temperature and recentrifuged at 40,000g, 4°C for 15-25 minutes. The membranes were then resuspended in assay buffer (composition in mM: HEPES 20, NaCl 100, MgCl<sub>2</sub> 10, pargyline 0.01; ascorbate 0.1%; pH 7.4 at room temperature) at a concentration of 40 µg protein/ml for the  $5-HT_{1D_\alpha}$  receptor transfected cells and 40-50 µg protein/ml for the  $5-HT_{1D_\beta}$  receptor transfected cells. The membrane suspension was then incubated, in a volume of 1 ml, with GDP (100 µM for  $5-HT_{1D_\alpha}$  receptor transfected cells, 30 µM for the  $5-HT_{1D_\beta}$  receptor transfected cells) and test compound at 30°C for 20 min and then transferred to ice for a further 15 min. [<sup>35</sup>S]-GTP $\gamma$ S was then added at a final concentration of 100 pM and the

- 37 -

samples incubated for 30 min at 30°C. The reaction was initiated by the addition of membrane and was terminated by rapid filtration through Whatman GF/B filters and washed with 5 ml water. The radioactive filters were then counted on a LKB beta counter. Functional parameters  
5 were determined by a non-linear, least squares regression analysis using an iterative curve fitting routine, from which E<sub>max</sub> (maximal effect) and EC<sub>50</sub> (the molar concentration of compound necessary to inhibit the maximal effect by 50%) values were obtained for each test compound. Of those compounds which were tested in this assay, the EC<sub>50</sub> values for the  
10 5-HT<sub>1Dα</sub> receptor obtained for the compounds of the accompanying Examples were below 500 nM in each case. Moreover, the compounds of the accompanying Examples which were tested were all found to possess at least a 10-fold selectivity for the 5-HT<sub>1Dα</sub> receptor subtype relative to the 5-HT<sub>1Dβ</sub> subtype.

15

#### INTERMEDIATE 1

##### 4-(1,2,4-Triazol-4-yl)phenylhydrazine

Prepared as described in WO 94/03446.

20

#### INTERMEDIATE 2

##### 3-Fluorophenylacetaldehyde

25 a) 1-(3-Fluorophenyl)-2-methoxyethene

Phenyllithium (98.3ml of a 1.8M solution in cyclohexane/diethyl ether, 177mmol) was added to a stirred suspension of (methoxymethyl)triphenylphosphonium chloride (60.82g, 177mmol) (dried overnight at 50°C *in vacuo* prior to use), in diethyl ether (500ml)  
30 at 0°C under nitrogen. The solid was seen to dissolve and a bright orange/brown coloration formed. The mixture was stirred at 0°C for

0.25h and then at room temperature for 0.5h. The mixture was cooled to -20°C and 3-fluorobenzaldehyde (20.0g, 161mmol) then added. The reaction mixture was allowed to warm to room temperature and stirred overnight (16h). Saturated ammonium chloride solution (250ml) was  
5 added and the aqueous phase separated and extracted further with diethyl ether (x2). The combined ethereal layers were dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ), evaporated *in vacuo* and the residue distilled ( $\approx 60^\circ\text{C}$  at 1.3mbar) to remove the majority of the phosphorous by-products. The distillate was then purified by column chromatography on silica gel, eluting with  
10 ethyl acetate/hexane (2:98) to give the title-*enol ether* as an E/Z mixture (10.7g, 44%),  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (250MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 3.69 and 3.80 (total 3H, 2 of s,  $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 5.21 and 5.77 (total 1H, 2 of d,  $J=7.0\text{Hz}$  and  $13.0\text{Hz}$  respectively,  $\text{C}=\text{CH}_2$  and  $\text{C}=\text{CH}_E$ ), 6.18 (d,  $J=7.0\text{Hz}$ ,  $\text{C}=\text{CH}_2$ ), 6.78-7.41 (m, Ar-H and  $\text{C}=\text{CH}_E$ ).  
15

b) 3-Fluorophenylacetaldehyde

Concentrated hydrochloric acid (45ml) was added to a stirred solution of the preceding enol ether (7.22g, 47.5mmol) in THF (225ml), at 0°C. The mixture was stirred under nitrogen for 0.3h at 0°C. and then at  
20 room temperature for 3h. Water was added and the volatiles were evaporated *in vacuo*. The residue was taken up in diethyl ether and the organic layer separated, washed with water (x2), saturated sodium bicarbonate solution (x1) and water (x1), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and evaporated *in vacuo* to afford the title-*aldehyde* (5.81g, 89%),  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (250MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 3.71 (2H, d,  $J=2.2\text{Hz}$ ,  $\text{CH}_2$ ), 6.93-7.39 (4H, m, Ar-H), 9.76 (1H, t,  $J=2.1\text{Hz}$ , CHO).

INTERMEDIATE 3

30 (R,S)-2-Fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propan-1-ol

a) (R,S)-2-Fluoro-5-hexen-1-ol

To a cooled (-10°C) and stirred mixture of hydrogen fluoride-pyridine (70% HF; 10ml) and anhydrous dichloromethane (60ml), in a polypropylene tube, was added dropwise *via* syringe neat 1,2-epoxy-5-hexene (13.8ml) over 20 minutes, under nitrogen. After a further 20 minutes, the yellow solution was carefully poured into ice-water-concentrated ammonia (57ml of ammonia; total volume 400ml) and the aqueous mixture was saturated with solid sodium chloride. Products were extracted with diethyl ether (2x500ml) and the combined ethereal solutions were washed with brine (45ml), brine - 10% aqueous sodium bicarbonate (5:1, 60ml) then dried ( $MgSO_4$ ) and concentrated (bath temperature 30°C). Flash chromatography to the residual liquid (silica gel, hexane - diethyl ether, 65:35) followed by purification on alumina (activity III, dichloromethane), gave 4.4g of the *title compound* as a colourless liquid;  $\delta_H$  (360MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ) 1.56-1.90 (2H, m), 2.10-2.30 (2H, m), 3.62-3.80 (2H, m), 4.48-4.70 (1H, dm,  $J=50Hz$ ), 5.00-5.12 (2H, m), 5.75-5.88 (1H, m).

20 b) (R,S)-6-*tert*-Butyldimethylsilyloxy-5-fluoro-1-hexene

To a stirred solution of 2-fluoro-5-hexen-1-ol (4.4g, 37.2mmol) in anhydrous dimethylformamide (125ml) were added imidazole (7.60g, 111.7mmol) and *tert*-butyldimethylsilyl chloride (8.42g, 55.9mmol), under nitrogen. After being stirred at room temperature for 7.5 hours, the mixture was diluted with diethyl ether (400ml) and it was washed with water (150ml), 1M hydrochloric acid (100ml), 5% aqueous sodium bicarbonate (100ml), brine (100ml), then dried ( $MgSO_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of the residue (silica gel, petrol ether (40-60) to petrol ether (40-60) - 5% diethyl ether) gave the *title compound* as a colourless liquid. Some impure fractions were repurified on alumina (activity III; petroleum ether (40-60)); total yield of product 6.72g (77.7%);

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$\delta_H$  (360MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 0.07 (6H, s), 0.90 (9H, s), 1.58-1.84 (2H, m), 2.10-2.30 (2H, m), 3.71 (2H, dd, J=22.2 and 4.7Hz), 4.40-4.60 (1H, dm, J=49Hz), 4.96-5.10 (2H, m), 5.75-5.88 (1H, m).

5    c)    (R,S)-5-tert-Butyldimethylsilyloxy-4-fluoropentanal

Ozone was bubbled through a cooled (-75°C) and stirred solution of the preceding olefin (6.7g, 28.8mmol) in anhydrous dichloromethane (150ml) until a blue colour persisted (45 minutes). Oxygen was then bubbled for 10 minutes through the solution before it was kept under a nitrogen atmosphere. Anhydrous dimethyl sulfide (10ml, 136.2mmol) was added at -78°C and the mixture was allowed to warm to room temperature. After 2 hours, solvents were removed under vacuum (bath temperature 32°C) and the residue was purified by flash chromatography (silica gel, hexane - diethyl ether, 80:20) to give 5.45g of the intermediate ozonide and 1 g of the *required title product*, as pale pink liquids. The ozonide (5.4g, 19.28mmol) in anhydrous dichloromethane (125ml) was cooled to -78°C, under nitrogen, and anhydrous triethylamine (5.4ml, 38.6mmol) was added over 2 minutes. The resulting solution was allowed to warm to room temperature and stirred for 2.5 hours. The mixture was half concentrated under vacuum and directly chromatographed on silica gel (dichloromethane) to give 3.60g of the *title compound* as a colourless liquid;  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 0.07 (6H, s), 0.90 (9H, s), 1.90-2.05 (2H, m), 2.54-2.72 (2H, m), 3.73 (2H, dd, J=21.3 and 4.5Hz), 4.40-4.62 (1H, dm, J=49.5Hz), 9.81 (1H, dd, J=2.1 and 0.9Hz).

25

d)    (R,S)-2-Fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propan-1-ol

To a stirred solution of the preceding aldehyde (4.60g, 19.6mmol) in dioxane (170ml) was added 4-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)phenylhydrazine (3.80g, 21.1mmol) followed by water (20ml). After 15 minutes, 2M hydrochloric acid (11ml) was added and the mixture was refluxed for 68 hours under

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nitrogen. Solvents were removed under vacuum and the residue was purified by flash chromatography (silica gel, dichloromethane - methanol, 90:10), then alumina (activity III, dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia, 95:5:0.5; then dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia, 90:10:1), to give  
5 700mg of the *title compound* as a yellow solid;  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>) 2.98-3.10 (2H, m), 3.44-3.66 (2H, m), 4.66-4.88 (1H, dm, J=49Hz), 4.93 (1H, t, J=5.6Hz), 7.32 (1H, dd, J=8.5 and 1.9Hz), 7.35 (1H, d, J=2.1Hz), 7.50 (1H, d, J=8.5Hz), 7.82 (1H, d, J=1.9Hz), 9.00 (2H, s), 11.19 (1H, s); m/e (ES) 261 (M<sup>++</sup>1).

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EXAMPLE 1

4-Benzyl-1-[(R,S)-2-(fluoromethyl)-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine. 2.5 Hydrogen Oxalate 0.4 Hydrate

15 a) 4-Benzyl-1-[(ethoxycarbonyl)acetyl] piperazine  
To a cooled (-20°C) and stirred solution of N-benzylpiperazine (10g, 56.7mmol) and triethylamine (8.7ml, 62.4mmol) in dichloromethane (200ml) was added ethyl malonyl chloride (8.5ml, 66.4mmol) over 10  
20 minutes, under nitrogen. The mixture was allowed to warm to room temperature and it was stirred for 1 hour before water (100ml) and diethyl ether (500ml) were added. The organic phase was decanted off, washed with water (1x70ml), 10% aqueous sodium bicarbonate (1x75ml), brine (1x75ml), then dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of  
25 the residue (silica gel, ethyl acetate - ethanol, 95:5) afforded 9.53g (58%) of the *title compound* as a colourless oil;  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>), 1.28 (3H, t, J=7.2Hz), 2.48 (4H, br s), 3.45 (2H, s), 3.47 (2H, br s), 3.56 (2H, br s), 3.68 (2H, br s), 4.19 (2H, q, J=7.2Hz), 7.24-7.36 (5H, m); m/e (ES) 291 (M<sup>++</sup>1).

30 b) (R,S)-4-Benzyl-1-[4-(1,3-dioxolan-2-yl)-2-(ethoxycarbonyl)-butyryl]piperazine

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To a stirred suspension of sodium hydride (60% dispersion in oil, 1.4g) in anhydrous dimethylformamide (50ml) was added dropwise, under nitrogen, a solution of 4-benzyl-1-[(ethoxycarbonyl)acetyl]piperazine (8.5g, 29.3mmol) in anhydrous dimethylformamide (50ml) over 25 minutes at 5 room temperature. After a further 30 minutes at room temperature, 2-(2-bromoethyl)-1,3-dioxolane (3.6ml, 30.7mmol) was added dropwise over 3 minutes and the resulting yellow solution was stirred for 24 hours. Water (400ml) was added and products were extracted with diethyl ether (3x300ml). The combined ethereal phases were washed with brine 10 (1x150ml), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of the residue (silica gel, diethyl ether - ethanol, 95:5) afforded 8g of the *title compound* (70%) as a colourless oil;  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (360MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 1.25 (3H, t,  $J=7.1\text{Hz}$ ), 1.56-1.78 (2H, m), 2.06 (2H, q,  $J=7.4\text{Hz}$ ), 2.44 (4H, br s), 3.46-3.96 (11H, m), 4.16 (2H, q,  $J=7.1\text{Hz}$ ), 4.86 (1H, t,  $J=4.6\text{Hz}$ ), 7.24-7.36 (5H, 15 m);  $m/e$  (ES) 391 ( $M^{++}1$ ).

c) (R,S)-4-Benzyl-1-[4-(1,3-dioxolan-2-yl)-2-(hydroxymethyl)-butyl]piperazine

To a cooled (-30°C) and stirred solution of lithium aluminium 20 hydride (1M in THF; 16.4ml) in anhydrous tetrahydrofuran (30ml) was added dropwise, *via cannula*, a solution of the product from the preceding step (3.2g, 8.19mmol) in anhydrous tetrahydrofuran (30ml) over 14 minutes, under a nitrogen atmosphere. The resulting clear colourless solution was allowed to warm to room temperature and it was stirred for 4 25 hours before excess lithium aluminium hydride was destroyed by careful addition of tetrahydrofuran-water (80:20; 25ml) (CAUTION! hydrogen evolution). The precipitated aluminium salts were filtered off, washed with tetrahydrofuran - water (80:20; 2x70ml) and the filtrate was concentrated under vacuum. Flash chromatography of the residue (silica 30 gel, diethyl ether-methanol, 92:8; and silica gel, dichloromethane-methanol, 93:7) afforded 1.96g (71.5%) of the *title compound* as a

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colourless oil;  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 1.14-1.24 (2H, m), 1.62-1.72 (2H, m), 1.92-2.06 (1H, m), 2.20-2.90 (10H, m), 3.42-3.56 (3H, m), 3.72-4.00 (5H, m), 4.81 (1H, t, J=4.6Hz), 7.20-7.36 (5H, m); m/e (ES) 335 (M<sup>++1</sup>).

5 d) 4-Benzyl-1-[(R,S)-2-(hydroxymethyl)-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine. 2.25 Hydrogen Oxalate

A solution of the preceding acetal (1.9g, 5.68mmol) and 4-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)phenylhydrazine (1.1g, 6.25mmol) in 4% aqueous sulfuric acid (80ml) was stirred at room temperature for 20 minutes, then refluxed for 10 45 hours. After cooling, the mixture was basified with 30% aqueous sodium hydroxide, diluted with ethyl acetate (150ml) and it was vigorously stirred for 1.5 hours. The organic phase was separated and the aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (3x300ml). The combined organic solutions were washed with brine (50ml), dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated. 15 Flash chromatography of the residue (silica gel, dichloromethane-methanol - ammonia, 92:8:0.8) gave 1.2g (49%) of the *title compound free base* as a white foam. The oxalate salt was prepared from absolute ethanol, mp 188-191°C. (Found: C, 55.94; H, 5.69; N, 13.28. C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>6</sub>O x 2.25 C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> requires: C, 55.96; H, 5.49; N, 13.27%).  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>) 2.14-2.24 (1H, m), 2.64-3.10 (12H, m), 3.39 (1H, dd, J=10.6 and 6.0Hz), 3.45 (1H, dd, J=10.6 and 4.3Hz), 3.77 (2H, m), 7.26-7.42 (7H, m), 7.49 (1H, d, J=8.6Hz), 7.78 (1H, d, 1.9Hz), 8.99 (2H, s), 11.17 (1H, s); m/e (ES) 431 (M<sup>++1</sup>).

25 e) 4-Benzyl-1-[(R,S)-2-(fluoromethyl)-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine. 2.5 Hydrogen Oxalate. 0.4 Hydrate

To a cooled (-20°C) and stirred solution of 4-benzyl-1-[(R,S)-2-(hydroxymethyl)-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine (135mg, 0.31mmol) and anhydrous triethylamine (89μl, 0.64mmol) in 30 anhydrous tetrahydrofuran (3ml) was added dropwise, under nitrogen, methanesulphonyl chloride (50μl, 0.64mmol). The resulting mixture was

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stirred at -20°C to -10°C for 1 hour 15 minutes before it was diluted with ethyl acetate (70ml) and washed with brine (2x20ml), then dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated (bath temperature 36°C). The remaining residue was dissolved in anhydrous dimethylformamide (5ml) and

5 tetrabutylammonium fluoride (615mg, 2.35mmol) was added. The resulting solution was heated at 60-70°C for 5 hours, under nitrogen. After cooling, water (50ml) and saturated aqueous potassium carbonate (5ml) were added and products were extracted with ethyl acetate (2x70ml). The combined organic solutions were washed with brine (1x35ml), dried  
10 ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of the residue (silica gel, dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia, 95:5:0.5) afforded 28mg of the *title compound free base*. The oxalate salt was prepared from ethanol-diethyl ether, mp 191-193°C. (Found: C, 54.14; H, 5.36; N, 12.49.  
 $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{29}\text{FN}_6 \times 2.5\text{C}_2\text{H}_2\text{O}_4 \times 0.4\text{H}_2\text{O}$  requires: C, 54.20; H, 5.28; N, 12.64%).  
15  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (360MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>) 2.24-2.43 (1H, m), 2.56-3.00 (12H, m), 4.01 (2H, s), 4.28-4.54 (2H, m), 7.30-7.48 (7H, m), 7.51 (1H, d, J=8.5Hz), 7.76 (1H, d, J=1.9Hz), 9.00 (2H, s), 11.21 (1H, s); m/e (ES) 433 (M<sup>++1</sup>).

#### EXAMPLE 2

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4-[2-(3-Fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine, 2,4 Hydrogen Oxalate

a) Ethyl (R,S)-4,5-epoxypentanoate  
25 To a cooled (-5°) and stirred solution of ethyl pent-4-enoate (10g, 78mmol) in dichloromethane (200ml) was added dropwise a solution of m-chloroperoxybenzoic acid (50-55%; 29.5g) in dichloromethane (250ml), over 30 minutes. The mixture was allowed to warm to room temperature overnight before it was diluted with diethyl ether (700ml) and washed  
30 with 2N aqueous sodium hydroxide (150ml), 10% sodium thiosulphate - 10% sodium iodide - 2N sodium hydroxide mixture (1:1:1, 2x80ml) and

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brine (2x100ml), then dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography (silica gel, dichloromethane to dichloromethane - diethyl ether, 1:1) of the residue afforded 10g (89%) of the *title compound* as a colourless liquid;  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (360MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 1.27 (3H, t,  $J=7.1\text{Hz}$ ), 1.79 (1H, qn,  $J=7.0\text{Hz}$ ), 1.97 (1H, m), 2.46 (2H, t,  $J=7.2\text{Hz}$ ), 2.51 (1H, m), 2.77 (1H, m), 2.99 (1H, m), 4.15 (2H, q,  $J=7.1\text{Hz}$ ).

(R,S)- $\gamma$ -[(4-*tert*-Butyloxycarbonylpiperazin-1-yl)methyl]-butyrolactone

A solution of the preceding epoxide (6.33g, 43.9mmol) and 4-*tert*-butyloxycarbonylpiperazine (16.35g, 87.7mmol) in toluene (100ml) was heated at 90°C for 67 hours, under a nitrogen atmosphere. The solvent was removed under vacuum and the residue was dissolved in diethyl ether (500ml) and washed with water (50ml), brine (75ml), then dried ( $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of the residue [silica gel, diethyl ether - ethanol (90:10) to diethyl ether - methanol (90:10) to dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia (95:5:0.5)] gave 5.35g (42.8%) of the *title compound* as a thick oil which solidified on standing;  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (250MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 1.46 (9H, s), 1.87-2.04 (1H, m), 2.25-2.38 (1H, m), 2.42-2.66 (8H, m), 3.44 (4H, t,  $J=5.0\text{Hz}$ ), 4.62-4.74 (1H, m); m/e (ES) 285 ( $M^{++}1$ ).

c) 1-*tert*-Butyloxycarbonyl-4-[(R,S)-2-hydroxy-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine

To a cooled (-80°C) and stirred solution of the preceding lactone (5.35g, 18.8mmol) in anhydrous toluene (200ml) was added dropwise, *via* cannula, a solution of diisobutylaluminium hydride (1.5M in toluene, 20ml) over 35 minutes, under nitrogen. After being stirred at -82°C for 2 hours 20 minutes, the reaction was quenched by dropwise addition of methanol (15ml) followed by aqueous potassium sodium tartrate (20%, 200ml) and ethyl acetate (100ml). The mixture was vigorously stirred while warming to room temperature and the organic phase was decanted off. The aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (3x250ml) and the

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combined organic solutions were washed with brine (50ml), then dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of the residue (silica gel, diethyl ether - methanol, 90:10 to 85:15) gave 4.60g (85.5%) of the intermediate lactol as a thick pale yellow oil; m/e (ES) 287 ( $M^{++}1$ ).

5        A solution of the above lactol (4.60g, 16.1mmol) and 4-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)phenylhydrazine (3.09g, 17.7mmol) in 4% sulfuric acid (200ml) was stirred at room temperature for 1 hour and then refluxed for 16.5 hours, under nitrogen. After cooling, the mixture was basified with solid potassium hydroxide and products were extracted with n-butanol (2x250ml). The combined organic solutions were concentrated under vacuum and the residue was dissolved in a mixture of tetrahydrofuran (200ml) and isopropanol (50ml). Di-*tert*-butyl dicarbonate (3.5g, 16.1mmol) was added and the mixture was stirred for 1 hour before it was basified (to pH 12) with 2N sodium hydroxide. Di-*tert*-butyl dicarbonate (1g) was added and stirring was continued for 30 minutes before solvents were removed under vacuum. The remaining residue was diluted with water (200ml) and extracted with hexane (2x150ml). The aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (4x250ml) and the combined extracts were washed with brine (100ml), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of the residue (silica gel, dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia, 95:5:0.5; and silica gel, dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia, 92:8:0.8) afforded 1.57g of the *title compound* as a yellow foam;  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (360MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 1.45 (9H, s), 2.32-2.48 (4H, m), 2.56-2.64 (2H, m), 2.89 (2H, d,  $J=5.9\text{Hz}$ ), 3.36-3.50 (4H, m), 4.00-4.08 (1H, m), 7.14 (1H, dd,  $J=5.8$  and 2.1Hz), 7.27 (1H, d,  $J=2.3\text{Hz}$ ), 7.48 (1H, d,  $J=8.5\text{Hz}$ ), 7.66 (1H, d,  $J=2.1\text{Hz}$ ), 8.47 (2H, s), 8.68 (1H, br s); m/e (ES) 427 ( $M^{++}1$ ).

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d)       4-[2-(3-Fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-{(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine. 2.4 Hydrogen Oxalate

30       To a cooled (-10°C) and stirred solution of the preceding secondary alcohol (500mg, 1.17mmol) and anhydrous triethylamine (326 $\mu\text{l}$ ,

2.34mmol) in anhydrous tetrahydrofuran (10ml) was added methanesulphonyl chloride (185 $\mu$ l, 2.34mmol) over 2 minutes, under nitrogen. The resulting cloudy solution was stirred at -10°C for 0.5 hours and at room temperature for 2 hours before it was diluted with ethyl acetate (125ml), washed with brine-water (1:1, 30ml), brine (30ml), dried ( $MgSO_4$ ), and concentrated. The residual yellow foam was dissolved in anhydrous dimethylformamide (15ml), solid tetrabutylammonium fluoride (2.70g) was added, and the resulting solution was heated at 70°C for 7 hours, under nitrogen. After cooling, the mixture was diluted with water (100ml), saturated aqueous potassium carbonate (3ml) was added, and products were extracted with ethyl acetate (2x100ml). The combined organic phases were washed with brine (60ml), dried ( $MgSO_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash chromatography of the residue (silica gel, dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia, 95:5:0.5) gave 57mg (11.4%) of 1-*tert*-butyloxycarbonyl-4-{{(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine; m/e (ES) 429 ( $M^{++}+1$ ).

A solution of the above fluoro compound (55mg, 0.128mmol) in methanol (5ml) and concentrated hydrochloric acid (3ml) was allowed to stand at room temperature for 1.5 hours. Solvents were removed under vacuum and the residue was azeotroped with methanol (2x10ml) to give a pale brown foam (60mg). This was dissolved in methanol (4ml) and sodium methoxide (30% w/v solution in methanol; 49 $\mu$ l) was added, followed by glacial acetic acid (37 $\mu$ l, 0.64mmol). A solution of 3-fluorophenylacetaldehyde (22mg, 0.16mmol) in methanol (1ml) was added followed, after 10 minutes, by sodium cyanoborohydride (15mg). The resulting solution was stirred at room temperature for 6 hours before more 3-fluorophenylacetaldehyde (17mg) and sodium cyanoborohydride (11mg) were added. Stirring was continued for a further 16 hours before sodium borohydride (30mg) was added and stirring was continued for 15 minutes. 4N Sodium hydroxide (4ml) was then added and the methanol was removed under vacuum. The remaining residue was diluted with water

(10ml) and brine (5ml), and products were extracted with ethyl acetate (2x40ml). The combined organic phases were washed with brine (25ml), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Preparative TLC purification (silica gel, dichloromethane - methanol - ammonia, 95:5:0.5) of the residue afforded  
5 34mg of the *title compound free base*. The oxalate salt was prepared from ethanol-diethyl ether, mp 193-195°C. (Found: C, 53.65; H, 5.11; N, 12.55.  $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{28}\text{F}_2\text{N}_6 \times 2.4\text{C}_2\text{H}_2\text{O}_4$  requires: C, 53.69; H, 4.96; N, 12.61%).  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (360MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>) 2.64-3.20 (16H, m), 5.04 (1H, dm, J=50Hz), 7.02-7.16 (3H, m), 7.38-7.40 (3H, m), 7.51 (1H, d, 8.8Hz), 7.83 (1H, s), 9.01 (2H, s),  
10 11.25 (1H, s); m/e (ES) 451 (M<sup>++</sup>1).

### EXAMPLE 3

4-Benzyl-1-[(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperidine, 1.75 Hydrogen Oxalate

To a stirred solution of Intermediate 3 (200mg, 0.77mmol) in anhydrous tetrahydrofuran (30ml) was added anhydrous triethylamine (214 $\mu$ l, 1.54mmol) followed by methanesulphonyl chloride (121 $\mu$ l, 1.54mmol). After being stirred for 2h 50 minutes at room temperature,  
20 under nitrogen, the mixture was diluted with ethyl acetate (125ml), washed with brine-water (1:1, 25ml), brine (25ml), then dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated.

A mixture of the mesylate thus obtained, anhydrous potassium carbonate (128mg) and 4-benzylpiperidine (270 $\mu$ l) in isopropanol (60ml)  
25 was refluxed, under nitrogen, for 18.5 hours. Additional 4-benzylpiperidine (3ml) was added and refluxing was resumed for 24 hours. Solvents were removed under vacuum and the residue was partitioned between water (60ml) and ethyl acetate (75ml). The organic phase was washed with brine (50ml), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated. Flash  
30 chromatography of the residue (silica gel, dichloromethane-methanol, 90:10; and silica gel, dichloromethane-methanol, 92:8) afforded 173mg

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(54%) of the *title compound free base*. The oxalate salt was prepared from ethanol-diethyl ether, mp 95-100°C. (Found: C, 59.53; H, 5.43; N, 11.99. C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>28</sub>FN<sub>5</sub> x 1.75C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> requires: C, 59.52; H, 5.52; N, 12.18%). δ<sub>H</sub> (360MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>) 1.34-1.52 (2H, m), 1.64-1.80 (3H, m), 2.74-2.94 (2H, m), 3.06-3.44 (6H, m), 5.20-5.42 (1H, dm, J=47Hz), 7.12-7.22 (3H, m), 7.24-7.40 (4H, m), 7.52 (1H, d, J=8.5Hz), 7.84 (1H, d, J=1.9Hz), 9.00 (2H, s), 11.33 (1H, s); m/e (ES) 418 (M<sup>++</sup>1).

#### EXAMPLE 4

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4-[(R,S)-2-(2-Fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine

Methyl 2-fluorophenylacetate (24.2 g, 0.144 mol) in THF (75 ml) was added dropwise over 20 min to a -78°C solution of LDA (diisopropylamine (16.0 g, 0.158 mol) and n-butyl lithium (2.5 M, 61 ml)) in THF (300 ml) and stirring was continued for 1h. Methyl iodide (22.5 g, 0.158 mol) was added dropwise over 15 min and the reaction mixture allowed to warm to room temperature over 1h. The solution was poured into saturated ammonium chloride solution and extracted with diethyl ether. The extract was washed with brine, dried and evaporated to yield methyl 2-(2-fluorophenyl)propanoate (26.2 g, 100%) as an oil.

Methyl 2-(2-fluorophenyl)propanoate (26.2 g, 0.144 mol) was dissolved in THF (325 ml) and LiOH (1 M, 173 ml) added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 2.5h, before diluting with diethyl ether and extracting with water and 1N NaOH. The aqueous layer was acidified and extracted with ethyl acetate (x2). The organic extract was washed with brine, dried and evaporated to yield 2-(2-fluorophenyl)propanoic acid (22.5 g, 100%) as an oil.

2-(2-Fluorophenyl)propanoic acid (7.7 g, 0.046 mol), 1-benzylpiperazine (8.0 g, 0.045 mol), triethylamine (4.6 g, 0.046 mol) and 1-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-3-ethyl carbodiimide hydrochloride (9.6 g, 0.050

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mol) were dissolved in dichloromethane (150 ml) and stirred at room temperature for 18h. The solution was evaporated and the residue diluted with water and extracted with brine, dried and evaporated.

Chromatography on silica gel with dichloromethane-methanol (97:3)

5 yielded 4-benzyl-1-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)propanoyl]piperazine (5.54 g, 38%) as an oil.

Lithium aluminium hydride (1M, 34 ml) was added dropwise over 15 min to a 0°C solution of 4-benzyl-1-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)propanoyl]piperazine (5.54 g, 0.017 mol) in THF (150 ml).

10 The reaction mixture was stirred at 0°C for 10 min and at room temperature for 24h, cooled to 0°C and quenched with water (1.6 ml), 4N NaOH (1.6 ml) and water (4.5 ml). The solid was filtered off through celite and the filtrate evaporated. Chromatography on silica gel with dichloromethane-methanol (99:1) yielded 4-benzyl-1-[2-(2-

15 fluorophenyl)propyl]piperazine (3.17 g, 60%) as a colourless oil.

4-Benzyl-1-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)propyl]piperazine (3.17 g, 0.01 mol), ammonium formate (3.2 g, 0.05 mol) and palladium (II) hydroxide on carbon (10% w/w, 1.6 g) were mixed in methanol (200 ml) and heated under reflux for 18h. The catalyst was filtered off through celite and the filtrate evaporated. Chromatography on silica gel with dichloromethane-methanol-880 ammonia (80:8:1) yielded 1-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)propyl]piperazine (1.64g, 73%) as a colourless oil, δ<sub>H</sub> (250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 1.2 (3H, d, J 7.0, Me), 2.3-2.6 (6H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 2.8-3.0 (4H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 3.1-3.2 (1H, m, MeCH), 6.9-7.4 (4H, m, ArH).

25 The mesylate (0.577 mmol) from Example 3, 1-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)propyl]piperazine (1.0 g, 4.5 mol), potassium carbonate (0.096 g, 0.692 mmol) and sodium iodide (0.085 g, 0.577 mmol) were dissolved in isopropyl alcohol (30 ml) and heated under reflux for 66h. The solvent was evaporated, and the residue diluted with water and extracted into ethyl acetate (x2). The extract was washed with brine, dried and evaporated. Chromatography on silica gel with dichloromethane-methanol

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(94:6) yielded the title compound (0.126 g, 47%) which was characterised as its oxalate salt; white crystals, mp 185-186°C (from methanol/diethyl ether); (Found: C, 55.81; H, 5.75; N, 11.85.  $C_{26}H_{30}N_6F_2 \cdot 1.75C_2H_2O_4$ .  $0.8H_2O$  requires C, 55.66; H, 5.56; N, 13.20%);  $\delta_H$  (360MHz,  $d_6$ -DMSO) 1.2 (3H, d,  $J$  7, Me), 2.7-3.1 (13H, m,  $CH_2$ ), 3.3-3.4 (2H, m,  $CH_2$ ), 5.0-5.2 (1H, dm,  $J_{HF}$  50, CHF), 7.0-7.4 (6H, m, ArH), 7.7 (1H, d,  $J$  9, indole H-7), 7.8 (1H, s, indole H-4), 9.0 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.2 (1H, br s, NH);  $m/z$  (ES) 465 ( $M^{++}H$ ).

The following Examples were made in the same way:

10

#### EXAMPLE 5

4-[(R,S)-2-(3-Fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine

15        Oxalate salt; white crystals, mp 183-185°C (from methanol-diethyl ether); (Found: C, 53.70; H, 5.65; N, 11.67.  $C_{26}H_{30}N_6F_2 \cdot 2.0C_2H_2O_4$ .  $1.5H_2O$  requires C, 53.65; H, 5.55; N, 12.51%);  $\delta_H$  (360MHz,  $d_6$ -DMSO) 1.2 (3H, d,  $J$  7, Me) 2.7-3.1 (15H, m,  $CH_2$ ), 5.0-5.2 (1H, dm,  $J_{HF}$  50, CHF), 7.0-7.4 (6H, m, ArH), 7.5 (1H, d,  $J$  9, indole H-7), 7.8 (1H, s, indole H-4), 9.0 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.2 (1H, br s, NH),  $m/z$  (ES) 465 ( $M^{++}H$ ).

#### EXAMPLE 6

4-[(R,S)-2-(4-Fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine

25        Oxalate salt; white crystals, mp 187-189°C (from methanol-diethyl ether); (Found: C, 54.96; H, 5.72; N, 11.75.  $C_{26}H_{30}N_6F_2 \cdot 1.75C_2H_2O_4$ .  $1.2H_2O$  requires C, 55.04; H, 5.62; N, 13.06%);  $\delta_H$  (360MHz,  $d_6$ -DMSO) 1.2 (3H, d,  $J$  7, Me) 2.7-3.1 (15H, m,  $CH_2$ ), 5.0-5.2 (1H, dm,  $J_{HF}$  45, CHF), 7.15 (2H, apparent t,  $J$  9, ArH), 7.25-7.4 (4H, m, ArH), 7.5 (1H, d,  $J$  9, indole H-

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7), 7.8 (1H, s, indole H-4), 9.0 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.3 (1H, br s, NH), *m/z* (ES) 465 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

EXAMPLE 7

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4-(2-Phenylethyl)-1-{(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine

Oxalate salt; mp 194-196°C (from methanol-diethyl ether); (Found: C, 55.87; H, 5.92; N, 12.23. C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>6</sub>F<sub>2</sub>. 2.0 C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>. 0.7H<sub>2</sub>O requires C, 55.71; H, 5.55; N, 13.44%); δ<sub>H</sub> (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 2.8-3.3 (16H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 4.9-5.2 (1H, dm, *J*<sub>HF</sub> 50, CHF), 7.2-7.4 (7H, m, ArH), 7.5 (1H, d, *J* 9, indole H-7), 7.8 (1H, s, indole H-4), 9.0 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.2 (1H, br s, NH), *m/z* (ES) 433 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

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EXAMPLE 8

4-[(R,S)-2-Phenylpropyl]-1-{(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine

Oxalate salt; white crystals (from methanol-diethyl ether); (Found: C, 55.80; H, 5.86; N, 12.06. C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>6</sub>F<sub>2</sub>. 2.0C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>. 1.0H<sub>2</sub>O requires C, 55.86; H, 5.79; N, 13.04%); δ<sub>H</sub> (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 1.2 (3H, d, *J* 7, CH<sub>3</sub>) 2.7-3.2 (15H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 5.0-5.2 (1H, dm, *J*<sub>HF</sub> 50, CHF), 7.1-7.4 (7H, m, ArH), 7.5 (1H, d, *J* 9, indole H-7), 7.8 (1H, s, indole H-4), 9.0 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.2 (1H, br s, NH), *m/z* (ES) 447 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

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EXAMPLE 9

4-[2-(2-Fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-{(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine

Oxalate salt; white crystals, mp 197-210°C (from EtOH); (Found: C, 54.68; H, 5.21; N, 13.21. C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>28</sub>F<sub>2</sub>N<sub>6</sub>. 2C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>. 0.2H<sub>2</sub>O requires C, 54.46;

H, 5.20; N, 13.14%);  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 2.7-3.2 (16H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 5.0-5.1 (1H, dm,  $J_{HF}$  48, CHF), 7.1 (2H, m, ArH), 7.3-7.4 (4H, m, ArH), 7.52 (1H, d,  $J$  8.6, ArH), 7.84 (1H, d,  $J$  1.9, ArH), 9.02 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.27 (1H, br s, NH), *m/z* (ES) 451 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

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#### EXAMPLE 10

4-[2-(4-Fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-{(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine

10        Oxalate salt; white crystals, mp 188-190°C (from EtOH); (Found: C, 54.22; H, 5.03; N, 12.74. C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>28</sub>F<sub>2</sub>N<sub>6</sub>. 2C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>. 0.2H<sub>2</sub>O requires C, 54.46; H, 5.20; N, 13.14%);  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 2.8-3.2 (16H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 5.0-5.1 (1H, dm,  $J_{HF}$  50, CHF), 7.15 (2H, t,  $J$  9, ArH), 7.2-7.3 (4H, m, ArH), 7.51 (1H, d,  $J$  8.6, ArH), 7.83 (1H, d,  $J$  1.9, ArH), 9.01 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.26 (1H, br s, NH), *m/z* (ES) 451 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

#### EXAMPLE 11

4-[(R,S)-2-(3-Pyridyl)propyl]-1-{(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine

20        Ethyl 3-pyridylacetate (12.2 g, 73.9 mmol) in THF (30 ml) was added to LDA (81 mmol) in THF (150 ml) over 10 min at -78°C. After 1h MeI (5.1 ml, 81 mmol) was added to the yellow suspension and the mixture brought to room temperature. H<sub>2</sub>O (300 ml) and ether (300 ml) was added, the mixture separated, and the organic layer washed with H<sub>2</sub>O and brine, dried and evaporated to give ethyl 2-(3-pyridyl)propanoate (8.3 g) as a yellow oil.

This was dissolved in THF (150 ml) and LiAlH<sub>4</sub> (1M in THF, 47 ml) added at 0°C. After 1h H<sub>2</sub>O (1.8 ml) was added, followed by 4M NaOH (1.8 ml) and H<sub>2</sub>O (5.6 ml). After stirring for 1h the mixture was filtered and evaporated to give 2-(3-pyridyl)propan-1-ol (6.3 g) as a yellow oil.

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Methanesulfonyl chloride (2.85 ml, 36.1 mmol) was added to this alcohol (4.5 g, 32.8 mmol) and Et<sub>3</sub>N (5 ml) in THF (70 ml) at 0°C. After 1 h saturated NaHCO<sub>3</sub> was added and the mixture extracted with EtOAc (x3). The organic layers was washed with brine, dried and evaporated. K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (5 g), iPrOH (60 ml) and BOC-piperazine (12.2 g, 65.5 mmol) were added and the mixture refluxed for 24h. After cooling, the solvent was evaporated, EtOAc (150 ml) added, and the mixture washed with H<sub>2</sub>O, brine, dried, evaporated, and purified by flash chromatography, eluting with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>:MeOH (95:5 v/v) to give 1-tert-butyloxycarbonyl-4-[(R,S)-2-(3-pyridyl)propyl]piperazine (3.51 g) as a white solid.

This was dissolved in MeOH (50 ml) and HCl gas bubbled through for 5 min. After standing for a further 15 minutes the solvent was evaporated, and the residue purified by ion exchange chromatography on DOWEX 50Wx8-200 (H<sup>+</sup> form) resin, washing with H<sub>2</sub>O and eluting the product with 3% NH<sub>3</sub> in H<sub>2</sub>O:MeOH (1:1 v/v) to give 1-[(R,S)-2-(3-pyridyl)propyl]piperazine (1.89 g) as a light brown oil.

This was coupled to the mesylate of Example 3 to give the title compound: oxalate salt; white crystals (from ethanol-diethyl ether); (Found: C, 53.59; H, 5.46; N, 15.23. C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>7</sub>F. 2.0C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>. 1.1H<sub>2</sub>O requires C, 53.79; H, 5.64; N, 15.14%); δ<sub>H</sub> (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 1.2 (3H, d, J 7, Me), 2.7-3.2 (15H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 5.0-5.2 (1H, dm, J<sub>HF</sub> 50, CHF), 7.3 (3H, m, ArH), 7.5 (1H, d, J 9, indole H-7), 7.7 (1H, d, J 8, pyridine H-4), 7.8 (1H, s, indole H-4), 8.4 (1H, d, J 4, pyridine H-2), 8.5 (1H, s, pyridine H-6), 9.0 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.2 (1H, br s, NH), m/z (ES) 448 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

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#### EXAMPLE 12

##### 4-[(R,S)-2-(4-Pyridyl)propyl]-1-[(R,S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine

30 2-(4-Pyridyl)propan-1-ol was prepared by the literature procedure (J. Indian Chem. Soc. (1966), 43, 549) and taken through as in Example 11

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to give the title compound: oxalate salt; white crystals (from ethanol-diethyl ether); (Found: C, 54.05; H, 5.41; N, 14.90.  $C_{25}H_{30}N_7F \cdot 2.0C_2H_2O_4 \cdot 1.1H_2O$  requires C, 53.79; H, 5.64; N, 15.14%);  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 1.2 (3H, d, *J* 7, Me), 2.7-3.2 (15H, m, CH<sub>2</sub>), 5.0-5.2 (1H, dm, *J*<sub>HF</sub> 50, CHF), 7.3 (4H, m, ArH), 7.5 (1H, d, *J* 9, indole H-4), 8.5 (2H, d, *J* 7, pyridine H-2), 9.0 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.2 (1H, br s, NH), *m/z* (ES) 448 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

### EXAMPLE 13

10    4-[*(R,S*)-2-(2-Pyridyl)propyl]-1-[(*R,S*)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine

2-*(2-Pyridyl)*propan-1-ol was prepared by the literature procedure (J. Indian Chem. Soc. (1966) 43, 549) and taken through as in Example 11 to give the title compound: oxalate salt; white crystals, mp 140-144°C (from EtOH); (Found: C, 53.96; H, 5.34; N, 14.83.  $C_{25}H_{30}FN_6 \cdot 2C_2H_2O_4 \cdot H_2O$  requires C, 53.95; H, 5.62; N, 15.19%);  $\delta_H$  (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 1.23 (3H, d, *J* 6.8, Me), 2.7-3.4 (15H, m, CH<sub>2</sub> and CH), 5.0-5.1 (1H, dm, *J*<sub>HF</sub> 50, CHF), 7.2-7.4 (4H, m, ArH), 7.52 (1H, d, *J* 8.6, ArH), 7.76 (1H, d, *J* 2 and 8, ArH), 7.83 (1H, d, *J*, 2, ArH), 8.50-8.55 (1H, m, ArH), 9.01 (2H, s, triazole-H), 11.28 (1H, s, NH), *m/z* (ES) 448 (M<sup>++</sup>H).

### EXAMPLE 14

25    4-[2-(3-Fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[(S)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl]piperazine

Butyllithium (48 ml, 1.6 M) was added to triethylsilylacetylene (10.7 g, 76.4 mmol) in THF (90 ml) at -78°C over 20 min. After 10 min BF<sub>3</sub>OEt<sub>2</sub> (10 ml, 82 mmol) was added, then after another 10 min (-)-benzyl-(R)-glycidyl ether (8.4 g, 51 mmol) in THF (20 ml) was added over 30 min. The mixture was stirred at -78°C for 1h then at 0°C for 20 min. Saturated NH<sub>4</sub>Cl was added and the mixture extracted with EtOAc (x3).

The combined organic layers were washed with H<sub>2</sub>O and brine, dried, evaporated, and purified by chromatography to give (R)-5-benzyloxy-4-hydroxy-1-triethylsilyl-1-pentyne (9.4 g, 61%).

This acetylene (7.6 g, 25 mmol), 2-iodo-4-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)aniline (5.6 g, 19.6 mmol), LiCl (927 mg, 19.7 mmol), Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (8.37 g, 79 mmol), and Ph<sub>3</sub>P (1.03 g, 3.93 mmol) were stirred in DMF (200 ml) at r.t. for 2h whilst N<sub>2</sub> gas was bubbled through the mixture. Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (441 mg, 1.97 mmol) was then added, and the reaction heated at 100°C for 20h. The mixture was cooled, filtered and evaporated. H<sub>2</sub>O (500 ml) was added, and extracted with ethyl acetate (x5). The combined organic layers were washed with H<sub>2</sub>O, brine, dried, and evaporated. A mixture of EtOH and 5M HCl (300 ml, 1:1 v/v) was added, and the solution stood at r.t. for 18h, then poured into saturated K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, and extracted with EtOAc (x3). The organic layers were washed with water and brine, dried, evaporated, and purified by flash chromatography, eluting with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>:MeOH (92:8 v/v) to give (R)-3-(3-benzyloxy-2-hydroxyprop-1-yl)-5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)indole (1.81 g, 26%).

This was dissolved in THF (100 ml) containing triethylamine (1.43 ml, 10.3 mmol) and cooled to -5°C. Methanesulfonyl chloride (820 µl, 10.3 mmol) was added and the mixture washed with H<sub>2</sub>O and brine, dried, and evaporated. DMF (30 ml) and tetrabutylammonium fluoride (14.4 g, 52 mmol) was added and the reaction stirred at 50°C for 16h then diluted with H<sub>2</sub>O (200 ml). The mixture was extracted with EtOAc (x3) and the combined organic layers washed with H<sub>2</sub>O and brine, dried, evaporated and purified by flash chromatography, eluting with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>:MeOH (90:10 v/v) to give (S)-1-benzyloxy-2-fluoro-3-(5-[1,2,4-triazol-4-yl]-1H-indol-3-yl)propane (407 mg, 22%) as a colourless foam. Debenzylation as above gave (S)-2-fluoro-3-(5-[1,2,4-triazol-4-yl]-1H-indol-3-yl)propanol as a white solid. Comparison with the racemic material by chiral HPLC (Chiral pak AS, 15% EtOH in hexane, 1 ml/min, 40°C) showed the compound to have 95% enantiomeric excess.

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This alcohol was mesylated and coupled to 1-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]piperazine as in Example 3 to give the title compound.

**EXAMPLE 15**

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4-[2-(3-Fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-{(R)-2-fluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine

This was made in the same way as Example 14, but starting with (+)-benzyl-(S)-glycidyl ether.

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**EXAMPLE 16**

4-[2-(3-Fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-{2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine 1.25 Hydrogen oxalate 1.0 Hydrate

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a) Ethyl bromodifluoroacetate (5 g, 24.6 mmol) and t-butyl piperazinecarboxylate (4.58 g) were mixed and gently heated to melt the solid. The reaction was allowed to cool. Trituration with petroleum ether (Bp 60-80°C) gave 4-(2-bromo-2,2-difluoroacetamido)-1-(t-butoxycarbonyl)piperazine as a colourless solid.  $\delta_H$  (250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 1.47 (9H, s), 3.48-3.55 (4H, m), 3.64-3.66 (4H, m).

b) A solution of allyltributyl tin (4.5 ml) and the product from above (5.0 g, 14.57 mmol) in 100 ml degassed benzene was heated to reflux under a nitrogen atmosphere in the presence of  $\alpha,\alpha'$ -azobisisobutyronitrile (50 mg). After 24 hours, the reaction was concentrated, and chromatographed using petroleum ether and then 20% ethyl acetate-petroleum ether as eluent. 4-(2,2-Difluoropent-4-enamido)-1-(t-butoxycarbonyl)piperazine was obtained as an oil which crystallised slowly on standing.  $\delta_H$  (250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 1.47 (9H, s), 2.83-3.01 (2H, m), 3.44-3.48 (4H, m), 3.59-3.63 (2H,

m), 3.67-3.71 (2H, m), 5.24 (1H, s), 5.28-5.31 (1H, d, J=7.5Hz), 5.70-5.94 (1H, m).

c) A solution of the product from above (0.5 g, 1.7 mmol) in 20 ml  
5 anhydrous THF was treated with borane-THF complex (8.2 ml of a 1.0M  
solution in THF). The reaction was heated to reflux for 18h, cooled and  
then concentrated. Methanol was added cautiously, the reaction  
reconcentrated, and methanol added again. Concentration *in vacuo* gave a  
clear oil which was dissolved in 10 ml THF and adjusted to pH 9 using 4N  
10 sodium hydroxide. Hydrogen peroxide (30% wt solution, 1 ml) was added,  
and the reaction allowed to stir at room temperature for 2½ hours. The  
organic phase was separated and the aqueous phase was extracted with  
diethyl ether. The combined organic phases were washed with brine, dried  
(MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated. Chromatography using 30% ethyl acetate -  
15 petroleum ether eluent gave 4-(2,2-difluoro-5-hydroxypentan-1-yl)-1-(t-  
butoxycarbonyl)piperazine as a clear oil. m/e (ES) 309 (M<sup>++1</sup>); δ<sub>H</sub>  
(250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 1.45 (9H, s), 1.70-1.82 (2H, m), 1.96-2.28 (2H, m), 2.54-  
2.64 (4H, m), 2.70-2.81 (2H, m), 3.43-3.47 (4H, m), 3.67-3.72 (2H, m).

20 d) A solution of the product from above (1.28 g, 4.2 mmol) and  
triethylamine (4 ml) in 12 ml anhydrous DMSO was treated with portions  
of sulphur trioxide-pyridine complex (1.3 g) using occasional cooling in an  
ice-water bath to moderate the exotherm. When addition was complete,  
the reaction was cooled in an ice-water bath, quenched with water and  
25 extracted into ethyl acetate. The organic phase was dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>),  
concentrated and chromatographed using 20-50% ethyl acetate-petroleum  
ether as eluent. 4-(2,2-Difluoro-5-pentanal)-1-(t-  
butoxycarbonyl)piperazine was obtained as a clear oil. m/e (ES) 307  
(M<sup>++1</sup>); δ<sub>H</sub> (250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 1.45 (9H, s), 2.13-2.27 (2H, m), 2.34-2.40 (4H,  
30 m), 2.50-2.54 (2H, m), 3.39-3.43 (4H, m), 3.49 (2H, br s), 9.81 (1H, s).

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e) A solution of the product from above (1.32 g, 4.3 mmol) and 4-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)phenylhydrazine (0.75 g) in 4% aqueous sulphuric acid was stirred at room temperature for 20 minutes and then heated to reflux for 21½ hours. The reaction was cooled, extracted into butanol, and the organic extracts concentrated. Chromatography using methanol-dichloromethane-ammonia (10:89:1) gave 1-{2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine as a brown oil. m/e (ES) 347 (M<sup>++</sup>1); δ<sub>H</sub> (250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub> + d<sub>4</sub> MeOD) 2.52-2.62 (6H, m), 2.85-2.90 (4H, m), 3.35-3.48 (2H, t, J=17.5Hz), 7.12-7.16 (1H, m), 7.30 (1H, s), 7.49-7.52 (1H, d, J=7.5Hz), 7.64-7.65 (1H, d, J=2.5Hz), 8.5 (2H, s).

f) A solution of the product from above (80 mg, 0.2 mmol), acetic acid (40 µl) and 3-fluorophenyl acetaldehyde (35 mg) in 4 ml methanol was stirred for 10 minutes and then treated with sodium cyanoborohydride (15 mg). A further 8 mg of aldehyde was added, and stirring was continued for 30 minutes. The reaction was quenched with 4N sodium hydroxide, concentrated and chromatographed to give the *title compound*. The oxalate salt was prepared from ethanol-diethyl ether, mp. 142-145°C. (Found: C, 55.53; H, 5.66; N, 13.62. C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>27</sub>N<sub>6</sub>F<sub>3</sub>. 1.25C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>. H<sub>2</sub>O requires C, 55.13; H, 5.30; N, 14.02). δ<sub>H</sub> (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 2.64-2.90 (6H, m), 2.90-2.95 (2H, m), 3.00-3.22 (6H, m), 3.36-3.50 (2H, d, J=18 Hz), 7.06-7.15 (3H, m), 7.32-7.41 (3H, m), 7.52-7.55 (1H, d, J=11Hz), 7.82 (1H, s), 8.99 (2H, s), 11.37 (1H, s); m/e (ES) 469 (M<sup>++</sup>1).

25

### EXAMPLE 17

4-[(±)-2-Phenylpropyl]-1-{2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazolyl-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine 1.0 Hydrogen Oxalate 0.9 Hydrate 1.3 Ethanolate

2-Phenylpropionaldehyde (50 mg, 0.38 mmol) was reacted in a similar manner as described in Example 16, step f to give the *title compound*. mp. softens at 109°C. δ<sub>H</sub> (360MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) (Found C, 58.33;

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H, 6.25; N, 12.93. C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>6</sub>F<sub>2</sub>. C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>. 0.9H<sub>2</sub>O. 1.3C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH requires C, 58.27; H, 6.65; N, 13.33). δ<sub>H</sub> (250MHz, d<sub>4</sub>-MeOH, free base) 1.19 (3H, d, J=6.7Hz), 2.30-2.64 (12H, m), 2.84-2.98 (1H, m), 3.42 (2H, t, J=16.2Hz), 7.14-7.31 (7H, m), 7.51-7.65 (1H, m), 7.83 (1H, m), 8.89 (2H, s). m/e (ES) 5 465 (M<sup>++</sup>1).

### EXAMPLE 18

4-[*(±)*-2-(4-Fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-{2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine Hydrogen Oxalate

2-(4-Fluorophenyl)propionaldehyde (49 mg, 0.31 mmol) and the piperazine from Example 16, step e (110 mg, 0.31 mmol) were reacted in a similar manner as described in Example 16, step f, to give the *title compound*. mp. softens at 65°C. δ<sub>H</sub> (500MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 1.14 (3H, d, J=6.9Hz), 2.29-2.49 (10H, m), 2.59 (2H, t, 15Hz), 2.91 (9H, q, J=5Hz), 3.42 (2H, t, J=15Hz), 7.09 (2H, t, J=5Hz), 7.23-7.25 (2H, m), 7.30-7.32 (1H, dd, J=10 and 5Hz), 7.36-7.37 (1H, d, J=5Hz), 7.50-7.51 (1H, d, J=5Hz), 7.80-7.81 (1H, d, J=5Hz), 8.97 (2H, s), 11.31 (1H, s). m/e (ES) 483 (M<sup>++</sup>1).

20

### EXAMPLE 19

4-[2-(2-Thienyl)ethyl]-1-{2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine 1,4 Hydrogen Oxalate

25 a) A solution of 2-(2-thienyl)ethanol (5.76 g, 45 mmol) and triethylamine (6.89 ml) in 30 ml anhydrous THF was stirred at 0°C under a nitrogen atmosphere. Methanesulfonyl chloride was added dropwise. The reaction was stirred for 1½h, washed with water, and the organic phase dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated to give the mesylate. δ<sub>H</sub> (250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 2.92 (3H, s), 3.27 (2H, t, J=7.5Hz), 4.42 (2H, t, J=7.5Hz), 6.90-6.98 (2H, m), 7.18-7.26 (1H, m).

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b) A solution of the mesylate from above (47 mg), the piperazine from Example 16, step e (80 mg, 0.2 mmol) and potassium carbonate (32 mg) in anhydrous DMF was heated to 100°C for 2½ hours. A further quantity of 5 the mesylate was added after 1 hour. The reaction was partitioned between ethyl acetate and water. The organic phase was dried ( $MgSO_4$ ), concentrated and chromatographed using methanol-dichloromethane-ammonia (5:95:1). The salt was prepared as described in Example 16, step f, to give the *title compound*, mp. 105-107°C (Found: C, 53.17; H, 4.77; N, 10 14.72.  $C_{28}H_{26}N_6SF_2$ . 1.4 $C_2H_2O_4$  requires C, 53.18; H, 4.98; N, 14.42).  $\delta_H$  (360MHz,  $d_6$ -MeOD, free base) 2.49-2.66 (11H, m), 2.95-3.00 (2H, m), 3.11-3.12 (1H, m), 3.45 (2H, t,  $J=14.4Hz$ ), 6.84-6.85 (1H, m), 6.88-6.91 (1H, m), 7.16-7.17 (1H, m), 7.26-7.34 (2H, m), 7.52-7.55 (1H, m), 7.83 (1H, s), 8.90 (2H, s). m/e (ES) 567.

15

**EXAMPLE 20**

**4-[2-(3-Thienyl)ethyl]-1-{2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine 1.75 Hydrogen Oxalate 1.0 Ethanolate**

20 The *title compound* was prepared in a similar method as described in Example 19 using 2-(3-thienyl)ethanol, mp. 161-164 °C (Found C, 50.94; H, 5.53; N, 11.55.  $C_{23}H_{26}F_2N_6S$ . 1.75 $C_2H_2O_4$ .  $C_2H_5OH$  requires C, 54.94; H, 5.16; N, 15.37).  $\delta_H$  (360MHz,  $d_6$ -DMSO) 2.68-2.90 (6H, m) 2.92-3.00 (2H, m), 3.04-3.30 (6H, m), 3.38-3.50 (2H, m), 7.05-7.06 (1H, m), 7.30-7.38 (2H, m), 7.40-7.44 (1H, m), 7.50-7.58 (2H, m), 7.80-7.84 (1H, m), 9.00 (2H, s), 11.37 (1H, s). m/e (ES) 457 ( $M^{++}+1$ ).

30

EXAMPLE 214-[(S)-2-Phenylpropyl]-1-(2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl)piperazine 2.1 Hydrogen Oxalate 2.0 Hydrate

5

a) A solution of 4-(2,2-difluoropent-4-enamido)-1-(t-butoxycarbonyl)piperazine (Example 16, step b) (5.0 g, 16.4 mmol) in 10 ml dichloromethane was treated with 2 ml trifluoroacetic acid. The reaction was concentrated after 24 hours, basified to pH 9 using 4N sodium hydroxide and extracted into dichloromethane. The organic extracts were dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated to give 4-(2,2-difluoropent-4-enamido)piperazine as a yellow oil.  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (250MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 2.83-3.01 (6H, m), 3.59-3.63 (2H, t,  $J=10\text{Hz}$ ), 3.67-3.71 (2H, t,  $J=10\text{Hz}$ ), 5.23 (1H, s), 5.27-5.30 (1H, d,  $J=7.5\text{Hz}$ ), 5.79-5.95 (1H, m).

15

b) A solution of the product from above (1.49 g, 7.3 mmol), triethylamine (2 ml) and (S)-(+)-2-phenylpropionic acid (1.1 g, 7.3 mmol) in 10 ml anhydrous dichloromethane was stirred at  $0^\circ\text{C}$  under a nitrogen atmosphere and was treated with bis(2-oxo-3-oxazolidinyl)phosphinic chloride (1.95 g, 7.7 mmol). The reaction was stirred at  $0^\circ\text{C}$  for  $\frac{1}{2}\text{h}$  and then at room temperature for 1h. The reaction was washed with water, dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ), concentrated and chromatographed using 20→50% ethyl acetate-petroleum ether eluent. 4-(2,2-Difluoropent-4-enamido)-1-[(S)-2-phenylpropionamido]piperazine was obtained as a clear oil.  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (250MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 1.44-1.47 (3H, d,  $J=7.5\text{Hz}$ ), 2.78-2.95 (3H, m), 3.2-3.5 (4H, m), 3.52-3.70 (1H, m), 3.70-4.60 (3H, m), 5.20-5.27 (2H, m), 5.73-5.89 (1H, m), 7.21-7.36 (5H, m).

c) The bis-amide from above (1.0 g, 3 mmol) was reacted in a similar manner as described in Example 16, step c. 4-(2,2-Difluoro-5-hydroxy-pentan-1-yl)-1-[(S)-2-phenylpropyl)piperazine was obtained as a clear oil.

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$\delta_H$  (250MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 1.28-1.30 (3H, d, J=5Hz), 1.60-1.74 (2H, m), 1.90-2.18 (2H, m), 2.4-2.7 (10H, m), 2.79 (2H, t, J=15Hz), 3.0-3.1 (1H, m), 3.48-3.58 (2H, m), 4.64 (1H, t, J=6Hz), 7.29-7.40 (5H, m); m/e (ES) 327 (M<sup>++1</sup>).

5       d)     The product from above (326 mg, 1 mmol) was reacted in a similar manner as described in Example 16, step d, and was used without purification in the next step.

10      e)     The product from above was reacted in a similar manner as described in Example 16, step e, to give the *title compound*. The salt was prepared as described in Example 16, step f. mp. 127-130°C. (Found: C, 52.57; H, 5.13; N, 12.15. C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>6</sub>F<sub>2</sub>. 2.1C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O requires C, 52.59; H, 5.58; N, 12.18).  $\delta_H$  (250MHz, d<sub>4</sub>-MeOD, free base), 1.20 (3H, d, J=2.5Hz), 2.36-2.54 (9H, m), 2.48 (2H, t, J=10Hz), 2.87-2.96 (2H, m), 3.34 (2H, t, J=17.5Hz), 7.14-7.32 (7H, m), 7.51-7.54 (1H, m), 7.83 (1H, d, J=2.5Hz), 8.88 (2H, s). m/e (ES) 465 (M<sup>++1</sup>).

#### EXAMPLE 22

20      4-[(+)-2-(3-Pyridyl)propyl]-1-{2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indol-3-yl]propyl}piperazine 3.5 Hydrogen Oxalate 0.12 Hydrate

a)     A solution of hexamethylene tetramine (12 g) and 5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1H-indole (10.5 g, 57.1 mmol) in acetic acid (125 ml, 30% v/v) was heated at reflux for 3 hours. The reaction was neutralized with potassium carbonate and the water removed *in vacuo*. The residue was triturated with water and the solid collected to give 5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-3-(carboxaldehyde)-1H-indole as a brown solid. m/e (ES) 213 (M<sup>++1</sup>).

30      b)     A suspension of the product from above (1.01 g, 4.8 mmol), N,N-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP) (47 mg) and di-*tert*-butyldicarbonate (1.03

g) in 25 ml dichloromethane, was stirred for 8 hours. Further quantities of DMAP (50 mg) and di-*tert*-butyldicarbonate (200 mg) were added after 1.5 hours. The reaction was concentrated, and the solid triturated with methanol, to give 5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-3-(carboxaldehyde)-1-(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)indole as a beige solid.  $\delta_H$  (250MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 1.90 (9H, s), 7.96-8.00 (1H, m), 8.46 (1H, d, J=10Hz), 8.54 (1H, d, J=3Hz), 9.03 (1H, s), 9.38 (2H, s), 10.34 (1H, s). m/e (ES) 313 (M<sup>+</sup>+1).

c) A suspension of activated zinc dust (85 mg) and the aldehyde from above (3.2 mg, 1 mmol) in 3 ml THF and 5 drops DMF was heated to reflux under a nitrogen atmosphere. Ethyl bromodifluoroacetate (0.14 ml, 1.1 mmol) was added. After 15 minutes, a further 0.5 eq. of ethyl bromodifluoroacetate was added, followed after 15 minutes by phenyl chlorothionoformate (0.18 ml, 1.3 mmol). The reaction was heated at reflux 1.5 hours, and partitioned between water-ethyl acetate. The combined organic phases were separated, dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>), concentrated and chromatographed using 5% methanol-dichloromethane. The partially purified product was heated to reflux in 15 ml degassed toluene with tributyl tin hydride (0.27 ml, 1 mmol) and  $\alpha,\alpha'$ -azobisisobutyronitrile (118 mg). After 2.5 hours, the reaction was concentrated, and chromatographed using 2→5% methanol-dichloromethane. Ethyl 2,2-difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1-(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)indol-3-yl]propanoate was obtained as a yellow oil. m/e (ES) 421 (M<sup>+</sup>+1).  $\delta_H$  (250MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 0.92 (3H, t, J=7.5Hz), 1.69 (9H, s), 3.49 (2H, t, J=15Hz), 4.28 (2H, q, J=7.5Hz), 7.30-7.35 (1H, m), 7.56 (1H, m), 7.67 (1H, s), 8.30-8.34 (1H, m), 8.50 (2H, s).

d) A solution of the product from above (179 mg, 0.4 mmol) in 3ml ethanol was treated with sodium borohydride (20 mg), and the reaction monitored by tlc. When all the starting material had reacted, the reaction was quenched by addition of water. The ethanol was removed *in vacuo*, and the products extracted with ethyl acetate. The organic phase was

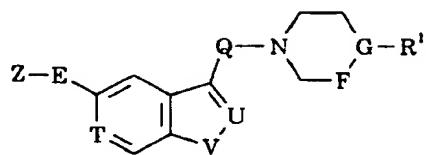
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dried ( $MgSO_4$ ), concentrated and chromatographed using 5% methanol-dichloromethane as eluent. 2,2-Difluoro-3-[5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1-(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)indol-3-yl]propan-1-ol was obtained as a yellow oil.  $m/e$  379 (ES) ( $M^{++}+1$ ).  $\delta_H$  (250MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ) 1.69 (9H, s), 3.42 (2H, t,  $J=17.5Hz$ ),  
5 3.77 (2H, t,  $J=12.5Hz$ ), 7.30-7.34 (1H, m), 7.69 (1H, s), 7.74 (1H, s), 8.29-8.32 (1H, m), 8.60 (2H, br s).

e) A solution of the product from above (80 mg, 0.21 mmol) in 10 ml anhydrous dichloromethane and pyridine (70  $\mu l$ ) was cooled to an internal  
10 temperature of -50°C under a nitrogen atmosphere.  
Trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (71  $\mu l$ ) was added, and the reaction allowed to stir at -25→-50°C for 1.5h. Five ml of water was added, and the reaction allowed to attain room temperature. The organic phase was separated, dried ( $MgSO_4$ ), and concentrated. The crude triflate was  
15 dissolved in 3 ml anhydrous DMF and heated at 120°C for 10 minutes with potassium carbonate (58 mg) and 1-[2-(3-pyridyl)propyl]piperazine (92 mg, 0.45 mmol). The reaction was partitioned between ethyl acetate and water. The organic phase was separated, dried ( $MgSO_4$ ), and concentrated, and chromatographed using dichloromethane-methanol-  
20 ammonia (90:10:1) to give the *title compound*. (Found C, 49.01; H, 5.13; N, 12.51.  $C_{25}H_{29}F_2N_7$ . 3½ $C_2H_2O_4$ . 1/8 $H_2O$  requires C, 58.37; H, 5.62; N, 17.65.  $\delta_H$  (250MHz,  $d_6$ -DMSO) 1.25-1.28 (3H, m), 2.35-2.62 (12H, m), 2.9-3.0 (1H, m), 3.41 (2H, t,  $J=17.5Hz$ ), 7.14-7.36 (3H, m), 7.47-7.50 (2H, m), 7.68 (1H, s), 8.47 (4H, m).

**CLAIMS:**

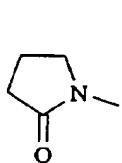
1. A compound of formula I, or a salt or prodrug thereof:



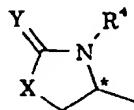
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wherein

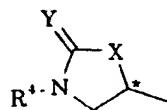
Z represents hydrogen, halogen, cyano, nitro, trifluoromethyl, -OR<sup>5</sup>, -OCOR<sup>5</sup>, -OCONR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -OCH<sub>2</sub>CN, -OCH<sub>2</sub>CONR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -SR<sup>5</sup>, -SOR<sup>5</sup>, -SO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>5</sup>,  
10 -SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>COR<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>CO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>6</sup>, -NR<sup>5</sup>SO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>6</sup>, -COR<sup>5</sup>, -CO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>5</sup>,  
-CONR<sup>5</sup>R<sup>6</sup>, or a group of formula (Za), (Zb), (Zc) or (Zd):



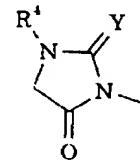
(Za)



(Zb)



(Zc)



(Zd)

15 in which the asterisk \* denotes a chiral centre; or

Z represents an optionally substituted five-membered heteroaromatic ring selected from furan, thiophene, pyrrole, oxazole, thiazole, isoxazole, isothiazole, imidazole, pyrazole, oxadiazole, thiadiazole, triazole and tetrazole;

20 X represents oxygen, sulphur, -NH- or methylene;

Y represents oxygen or sulphur;

E represents a chemical bond or a straight or branched alkylene chain containing from 1 to 4 carbon atoms;

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**Q** represents a straight or branched alkylene chain containing from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, substituted in any position by one or more fluorine atoms;

**T** represents nitrogen or CH;

5      **U** represents nitrogen or C-R<sup>2</sup>;

**V** represents oxygen, sulphur or N-R<sup>3</sup>;

-F-G- represents -CH<sub>2</sub>-N-, -CH<sub>2</sub>-CH- or -CH=C-;

10     **R**<sup>1</sup> represents C<sub>3-6</sub> alkenyl, C<sub>3-6</sub> alkynyl, aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, any of which groups may be optionally substituted;

15     **R**<sup>2</sup>, **R**<sup>3</sup> and **R**<sup>4</sup> independently represent hydrogen or C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl; and **R**<sup>5</sup> and **R**<sup>6</sup> independently represent hydrogen, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl,

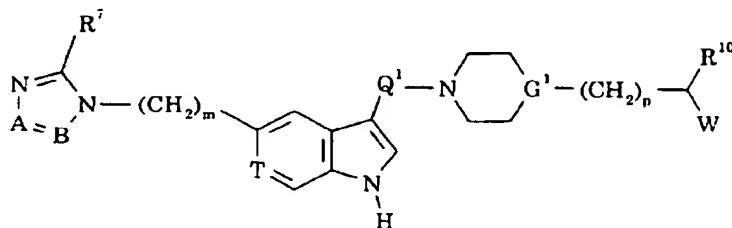
trifluoromethyl, phenyl, methylphenyl, or an optionally substituted aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl or heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl group; or **R**<sup>5</sup> and **R**<sup>6</sup>, when linked through a nitrogen atom, together represent the residue of an optionally

20     15    substituted azetidine, pyrrolidine, piperidine, morpholine or piperazine ring.

2.    A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein **Q** represents 2-fluoropropylene, 2,2-difluoropropylene or 2-fluoromethyl-propylene.

25

3.    A compound as claimed in claim 1 represented by formula IIA, and salts and prodrugs thereof:



(IIA)

wherein

**m** is zero, 1, 2 or 3;

**p** is zero, 1 or 2;

5      **Q<sup>1</sup>** represents a straight or branched alkylene chain containing from 2 to 5 carbon atoms, substituted in any position by one or more fluorine atoms;

**T** represents nitrogen or CH;

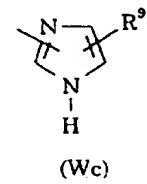
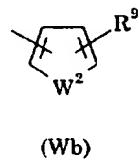
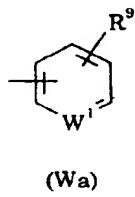
**G<sup>1</sup>** represents nitrogen or CH;

**A** represents nitrogen or CH;

10     **B** represents nitrogen or C-R<sup>8</sup>;

**R<sup>7</sup>** and **R<sup>8</sup>** independently represent hydrogen, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkenyl, C<sub>3-7</sub> cycloalkyl, aryl, aryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, C<sub>3-7</sub> heterocycloalkyl, heteroaryl, heteroaryl(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylthio, amino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylamino, halogen, cyano or trifluoromethyl;

15     **W** represents a group of formula (Wa), (Wb) or (Wc):



in which

20     **W<sup>1</sup>** represents CH or nitrogen;

**W<sup>2</sup>** represents oxygen, sulphur, NH or N-methyl;

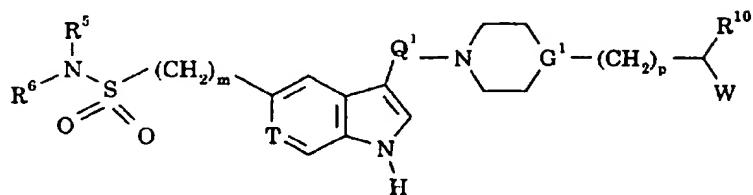
25     **R<sup>9</sup>** represents hydrogen, halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, triazolyl, tetrazolyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl-tetrazolyl, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkylcarbonyl, amino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylamino, di(C<sub>1-6</sub>)alkylaminomethyl, C<sub>2-6</sub> alkylcarbonylamino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylsulphonylamino, aminocarbonylamino, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminocarbonyl, aminosulphonyl or C<sub>1-6</sub> alkylaminosulphonylmethyl; and

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$R^{10}$  represents hydrogen or C<sub>1-3</sub> alkyl.

4. A compound as claimed in claim 1 represented by formula IIB, and salts and prodrugs thereof:

5



(IIB)

wherein

10 m, p, Q<sup>1</sup>, T, G<sup>1</sup>, W and R<sup>10</sup> are as defined in claim 3; and  
R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> are as defined in claim 1.

5. A compound as claimed in claim 1 represented by formula IIC, and salts and prodrugs thereof:

15

(IIC)

wherein the asterisk \* denotes a chiral centre;

m, p, Q<sup>1</sup>, T, G<sup>1</sup>, W and R<sup>10</sup> are as defined in claim 3; and  
R<sup>4</sup> and Y are as defined in claim 1.

20

6. A compound selected from:

- 70 -

4-benzyl-1-[2-fluoromethyl-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
5 4-benzyl-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperidine;  
and salts and prodrugs thereof.

7. A compound selected from:

10 4-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
4-[2-(4-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
15 4-(2-phenylethyl)-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
4-(2-phenylpropyl)-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
20 4-[2-(2-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
4-[2-(4-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
4-[2-(3-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
25 4-[2-(4-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
4-[2-(2-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;  
30 4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[(*S*)-2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

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4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[(*R*)-2-fluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(3-fluorophenyl)ethyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

5 4-(2-phenylpropyl)-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(4-fluorophenyl)propyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[2-(2-thienyl)ethyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

10 4-[2-(3-thienyl)ethyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

4-[(*S*)-2-phenylpropyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

15 4-[2-(3-pyridyl)propyl]-1-[2,2-difluoro-3-(5-(1,2,4-triazol-4-yl)-1*H*-indol-3-yl)propyl]piperazine;

and salts and prodrugs thereof.

8. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of  
20 formula I as defined in claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt  
thereof or a prodrug thereof in association with a pharmaceutically  
acceptable carrier.

9. A compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7 for use in  
25 therapy.

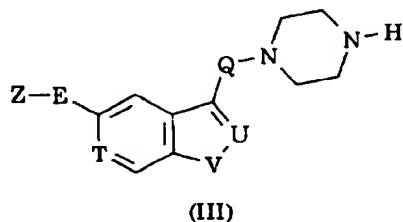
10. The use of a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7  
for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or prevention  
of clinical conditions for which an agonist of 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptors selective for  
30 the 5-HT<sub>1Dα</sub> subtype thereof is indicated.

- 72 -

11. A process for the preparation of a compound as claimed in  
claim 1, which comprises:

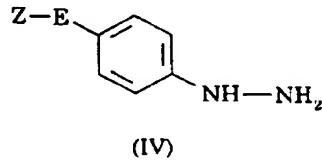
(A) attachment of the R<sup>1</sup> moiety to a compound of formula III:

5

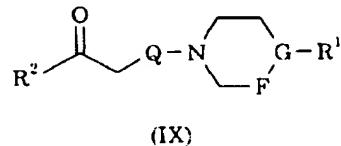


wherein Z, E, Q, T, U and V are as defined in claim 1; or

10 (B) reacting a compound of formula IV:

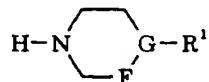


15 wherein Z and E are as defined in claim 1; with a compound of formula IX,  
or a carbonyl-protected form thereof:



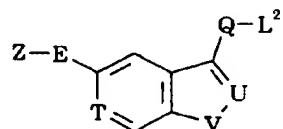
20 wherein Q, F, G, R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are as defined in claim 1; followed, where  
required, by N-alkylation by standard methods to introduce the moiety R<sup>3</sup>:  
or

(C) reacting a compound of formula XI:



(xi)

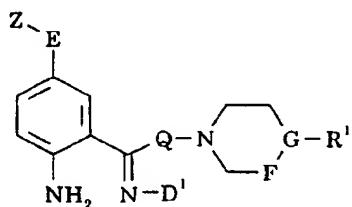
5 wherein F, G and R<sup>1</sup> are as defined in claim 1; with a compound of formula  
XII:



(XII)

10 wherein Z, E, Q, T, U and V are as defined in claim 1, and L<sup>2</sup> represents a suitable leaving group; or

(D) cyclising a compound of formula XIV:



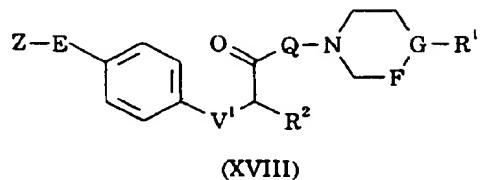
15

(XIV)

in which Z, E, Q, F, G and R<sup>1</sup> are as defined in claim 1, and D<sup>1</sup> represents a readily displaceable group; followed, where required, by N-alkylation by standard methods to introduce the moiety R<sup>3</sup>; or

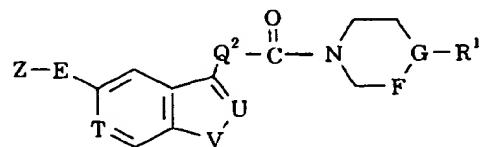
- 74 -

(E) cyclising a compound of formula XVIII:



5 wherein Z, E, Q, F, G, R¹ and R² are as defined in claim 1, and V¹  
represents oxygen or sulphur; or

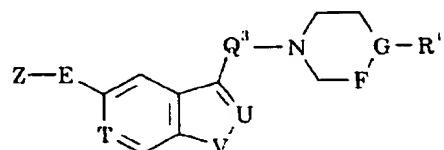
(F) reducing a compound of formula XXII:



10

wherein Z, E, T, U, V, F, G and R¹ are as defined in claim 1, and -Q²-CH₂-  
corresponds to the moiety Q as defined in claim 1; or

15 (G) reacting a compound of formula XXVI:



20 wherein Z, E, T, U, V, F, G and R¹ are as defined in claim 1, and Q³  
corresponds to the moiety Q as defined in claim 1 in which the or each

fluorine atom is replaced by a leaving group; with an available source of fluoride ion; and

(H) subsequently, if necessary, converting a compound of formula I initially obtained into a further compound of formula I by standard methods.

12. A method for the treatment and/or prevention of clinical conditions for which an agonist of 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptors selective for the 5-HT<sub>1D<sub>a</sub></sub> subtype thereof is indicated, which method comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment an effective amount of a compound of formula I as defined in claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof.

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

Internat'l Application No
PCT/GB 96/02762

<b>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER</b>
IPC 6 C07D403/06 C07D401/06 C07D413/14 C07D401/14 C07D409/14 A61K31/495 A61K31/445

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)  
IPC 6 C07D A61K

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

**C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 94 02477 A (MERCK SHARP & DOHME LTD.) 3 February 1994 cited in the application see claims ---	1-12
P,A	WO 95 32196 A (MERCK SHARP & DOHME LTD.) 30 November 1995 see claims ---	1-12
P,A	WO 96 16056 A (MERCK SHARP & DOHME LTD.) 30 May 1996 see claims -----	1-12

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents :

- \*'A' document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- \*'E' earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- \*'L' document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- \*'O' document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- \*'P' document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- \*'T' later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- \*'X' document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- \*'Y' document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- \*'A' document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

Date of mailing of the international search report

15 January 1997

31.01.97

Name and mailing address of the ISA  
European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentstaan 2  
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk  
Tel. (+ 31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl.  
Fax (+ 31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Chouly, J

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/GB 96/02762

## Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1.  Claims Nos.: because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:  
Although claim 12 is directed to a method of treatment of (diagnostic method practised on) the human/animal body the search has been carried out and based on the alleged effects of the compound/composition.
2.  Claims Nos.: because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
3.  Claims Nos.: because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

## Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1.  As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2.  As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3.  As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4.  No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

### Remark on Protest

The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.  
 No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

Internat'l Application No  
PCT/GB 96/02762

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
WO-A-9402477	03-02-94	AU-B-	672802	17-10-96
		AU-A-	4578593	14-02-94
		CA-A-	2138649	03-02-94
		EP-A-	0651749	10-05-95
		JP-T-	7509452	19-10-95
		US-A-	5567726	22-10-96
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WO-A-9532196	30-11-95	AU-A-	2529695	18-12-95
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WO-A-9616056	30-05-96	AU-A-	3875095	17-06-96
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